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BETTER THAN GOLD.

BY EMILY S. OAKEY.

A song of my darling who came through the meadow,
With bonny brown hair and her kirtle so red.
The sunshine she brought with her stole through my shadow,
And sweet to my ears were the words that she said.
She gave me a flower that she wore in her bosom,
And violets, not half so blue as her eyes,
Deep down in my soul they immortally blossom,
I read her warm heart through their fairy disguise.

She makes no pretence of undying devotion,
Her love, by her showing, is fleeting as dew;
She laughs at my constancy, yet I've a notion
She's truer than many who boast themselves true.
Her chiding is sweeter than others' caressing,
She leads me at will by a thread she doth hold;
The least little touch of her hand is a blessing,
And a kiss from my darling is better than gold.

Her Mother's Crime.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "FROM GLOOM TO SUNLIGHT," "A BROKEN WEDDING RING," "A BLACK VEIL," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER VI.—[CONTINUED.]

"WHICH rooms shall we prepare for Irene?" asked Lady Marcia.

"I must think," he replied. "I do not imagine she will care for flowers as Daphne does.

"Let her have the suite of rooms that overlook the river and the ruins. She will appreciate them.

"In my whole life," he continued earnestly, "I have never met any one with so lofty a soul, so noble a mind, so fine a character."

"That is high praise," said Lady Marcia wonderingly.

"I could never praise Irene highly enough," said the Earl. "It is a thousand pities to find her energies so completely wasted as they are in the life that Lady Ryeford prefers.

"I have never met any one so capable. That girl could manage a kingdom. She has wonderful powers of administration and broad views of life."

"Rather an unusual character?" queried Lady Marcia.

"Yes.

"And she is truthful as truth itself; she is one of those who would prefer death to dishonor.

"She is the very ideal of a noble woman, just, generous, firm, ambitious in the right direction."

"And how old?" asked Lady Marcia.

"Between nineteen and twenty," he replied.

"She must be a prodigy," said Lady Marcia.

"She is one," replied the Earl—"to my way of thinking, at least."

Lady Marcia looked with wonder at her brother-in-law.

"Thane," she said suddenly, "you puzzle me.

"Which do you consider the finer of the two?"

"I really do not know," he answered.

"Which do you like best?" she continued.

"I cannot tell," he replied hopelessly.

"You do not know!

"You cannot tell! Why I thought you had decided?"

"Certainly not," he answered. "How could I decide?

"When I first saw Daphne, I thought she must be my choice: when I first saw Irene, I must own that I was not so charmed, but, after a time, I thought to myself that there was no one to compare with her."

"How vexatious!" said Lady Marcia. "Had one been worthy and the other unworthy, your course would have been clear.

"What shall you do, Thane?"

"Heaven will help us," he replied. "I have full faith and firm hope that all will come right at last; but as yet I cannot foresee which of the two girls will become Countess of Cradoc."

* * * * * *

Lady Ryeford had completed her preparations.

There was just one more reception which she was anxious to attend, because the hostess had told her that the young Earl of Studley would be there.

It was almost a hopeless chance; but Irene might be induced to listen to him; and then—why, even the glories of Poole paled before such a prospect!

An event had happened just before which had cheered Irene and given her hope.

Arran Darleigh had made his name famous by his defence of a man charged with murder.

He had conducted the case so ably, his speech for the defence had been so clever, that the attention of the whole country was drawn to it.

His briefless days were past, his fortune was made.

Nor was that all.

Not content with giving him more to do in a week than he could get through in a month, the world opened arms to him. He was invited to some of the best houses in town.

Husbands looking over their wives' invitation-lists, said, "Do not forget to send a card to that rising young barrister Arran Darleigh."

And he accepted every invitation in the hope of meeting his beautiful young love.

When an invitation came from Lady Devon, his heart beat high.

She was the wife of an eminent judge, and her husband, before whom the famous murder-case had been tried, impressed upon her not to forget to invite "that young barrister to dinner."

"A promising young man that," said he.

"He will sit in my place some day if he sticks steadily to his work."

The dinner-party was to be followed by a dance.

Lord Studley was invited, and Lady Ryeford had promised to bring her beautiful daughter.

The widow's face brightened with pleasure when she caught sight of the young peer.

He had heard that Miss Ryeford was to be present, and his valet had had a bad quarter of an hour; but the result was satisfactory.

He took a seat between mother and daughter, looking one moment ecstatically happy, the next absurdly miserable, for Irene's dark eyes glanced at him frigidly; indeed, she all but ignored him. That he should presume to admire her seemed to her almost an insult.

For in her heart was enshrined a handsome powerful face, with eyes full of life and energy.

She was absolutely startled when Arran Darleigh stood before her; she had not expected to see him.

Lady Ryeford turned to her with a stern face.

"You did not tell me he was coming!" she whispered angrily.

"I did not know," was the brief reply.

Lady Ryeford longed to forbid her to speak to him or to acknowledge his presence; but she dared not, lest she should attract attention to that which she most wished to conceal.

Arran bowed to the irate lady.

There was an expression in her eyes and about her mouth that he did not at all like.

"A strong coarse, common nature," he said to himself.

Still, as the mother of the girl he loved, he was bound to pay all due respect to her.

It was delightful to see Irene's face as her lover came up to her.

The pride, the coldness, and the *hauteur* vanished like snow before the sun; the glowing blushes, the tremulous happiness, the love-light in the glorious eyes, the smiles on the perfect lips, were beautiful to see.

No word passed between them when they met.

They only clasped each other's hand in silence.

As he gazed, his whole heart went out to her, and he could have knelt at her feet. After a few seconds, he spoke.

"I have been longing for this," he said. "You will find one half-hour for me during the evening?"

Her face even more than her words told him how well pleased she would be to do so.

He remained by her side, talking to her, much to Lord Studley's annoyance and Lady Ryeford's wrath until dinner was served.

Then he was compelled to give way, for Lady Devon asked the young Earl to take Miss Ryeford down to dinner—a good-natured proceeding on the part of her ladyship, as she knew quite well the story of his hapless and infatuated attachment to her.

Irene bore the annoyance as well as she could.

Fortunately for her, the Earl was somewhat of a *gourmand*, a good dinner being to him an attraction second only to that of a beautiful face—and Lady Devon always gave good dinners—consequently she was not compelled to say much to him. He interspersed running comments on the wines and dishes with compliments to herself, and she was able to give her thoughts free course.

How distinguished and handsome her lover looked, with his eloquent eyes, his tall, strong, well-built figure!

How well he spoke—with what animation and intelligence!

As the dinner proceeded, she saw that he was the guest of the evening.

Gradually everybody became interested in him.

The judge deferred to him; the most brilliant men present enjoyed a "tilt" with him.

He was what Lady Devon called "a social light," and Irene was proud of him.

"How can mamma be so blind?" she said to herself.

"Brains are better than money all the world over.

"The dreadful-looking little Earl has—I forget how many thousands a year, and Arran has nothing but what he earns; yet could any one hesitate for a moment between them?

"My Arran is one of nature's gentlemen, a king amongst men; the other—well, he might illustrate Darwin's theory of the descent of man."

"That lawyer-fellow talks well," remarked the Earl.

Then he wondered why the dark eyes flashed into his.

Later on in the evening Lady Devon proposed whist, and Lady Ryeford, who was a good player and generally a winner, could not resist the temptation.

She was afraid that, if she left Irene, Arran might at once seek her, yet she was unable to resist the prospect of winning a little acceptable ready money.

But there could not be much harm done in a room full of people; there could be no love-making.

Lord Studley, too, was present and he would be careful not to allow any one to monopolize Irene's society.

Lady Ryeford sat down almost contentedly to her whist.

Now was the opportunity; and Arran hastened to avail himself of it. He went up to Irene.

"You have promised me half an hour, my darling," he said. "Will you give it to me now?"

They crossed the room together, Lord Studley following them with jealous eyes. He did not approve of this lawyer, who had so suddenly sprung into notice, engrossing the time and attention of the most beautiful woman in the room—one, too, who had been asked especially to meet him. They were standing in the deep recess of the bay-window, talking quietly but earnestly.

But such a state of things should not last long.

He would interrupt them.

Lady Devon ought to manage things better than this.

So the little lord fretted and fumed, while the two persons over whom he made himself so miserable were supremely happy.

"I cannot clasp that sweet white hand of yours, Irene, and I cannot kiss your sweet lips," said Arran; "but my heart has been aching to tell you once more how dearly I love you."

"It is weary waiting," she returned, with a smile and a half sigh. "But what good news for us, Arran! I hear that every one is talking of you, and that you are the man of the day."

"I shall claim you soon, my darling, and I shall have the noblest, dearest wife in the whole wide world.

"But it is of you I wish to speak, not of myself.

"Is it true that you are going to Poole with Lady Ryeford?"

"Yes," she replied; "we are going on the day after to-morrow."

"Shall you be long away, Irene?"

"I am afraid we shall remain until Christmas."

"Do you like going?"

"I do not like leaving you," said Irene frankly.

"I am happiest in London, because, although I do not see you often, there is always a possibility that I may meet you. I wake every morning with that hope in my heart.

"We breathe the same air, hear the same sounds, see the same sights; we are near one another—and that is always a comfort to me to remember.

"At Poole I shall be far away from you."

"Do you know what the world says, Irene my darling?" he asked slowly.

"Nothing worth hearing, Arran. Tell me of yourself, not of the world. I do not like the world."

"But this concerns you my beautiful Irene.

"The world says that Lord Cradoc will probably make you a very wealthy heiress."

"The world is wrong," she said, with a bright glad smile.

"Why, that would be perfectly terrible Arran.

"Things are bad enough as it is; but that I should become a wealthy heiress would be the most unfortunate thing that could happen to us."

"It would indeed," agreed Arran.

"I have been miserable ever since I heard it."

"You need not be so; I shall always be true to you."

"My darling," he cried, "do not look at me with such eyes!

"Hide them from me; they make me desperate.

"Was ever a man so tormented?

"One of the noblest, loveliest women in the whole world is to be my wife, yet I can never see her, speak to her, kiss her —"

"Be careful, Arran. Lord Studley is looking," said Irene.

"If he comes here, I shall open the window and drop him out!" cried Arran.

And Irene had to soothe him as she alone knew how.

CHAPTER VII.

NEVER had Poole looked more beautiful than on the day when its future might be held at stake. The gardens were gorgeous with autumn flowers, chrysanthemums of every shade, tall and stately hollyhocks.

The woods, lovely enough in summer, presented now, in their autumnal splendor a truly glorious picture.

The tall plane-trees were in their fullest beauty.

The black pines stood erect and stately, presenting a striking contrast to the varicolored foliage of oak, beech, and hawthorn.

Lady Marcia Hyde could not rest, so much was at stake.

If one of the boys had but lived, she would have felt easy about Poole.

The boys had been trained to inherit; they knew the family traditions; they had been carefully taught the duties of their position.

She had listened to Alaric many times with tears in her eyes, when he had talked of the future and of what he hoped to accomplish.

The ingenuous face rose before her, with its blue laughing eyes and tender mouth. Ah, but for her brother-in-law's foolish scheme, this trying ordeal, this investigation of character, temperament and worth, need never have been!

The Earl had sent a favorite old servant for Daphne, since Mr. Erlecote, as a matter of course, could not leave his painting; and even if he had been willing to do so, it would have been Daphne who would have taken care of him, and not he of her.

Lady Ryeford and Irene would travel together.

Lord Cradoc himself would not show his anxiety or his distress.

But, though he talked on topics innumerable, made inquiries about the preparations, tried to interest himself and his sister-in-law in the news of the day, there was the one thought always before him—"The girls are coming to-day, and one must take my boys' place."

Which would it be?

Would tender golden-haired Daphne or queenly Irene be mistress of this broad domain, with its royal revenue?

He would have given much for one glance of the future.

Would that, as Marcia had dreamed of his poor lads' fate, she might now so dream of the future!

Lady Marcia hovered round her brother-in-law during breakfast, listening to him, trying to be interested, yet all the time brooding over what was to be.

"Thane," she said at last, "I know that you are talking to avoid thinking. We are both aware that to-day is one of the most momentous of our lives. Let us talk about it freely.

"I have been thinking that it would be much better to invite Mr. Rigby over to dine to-day.

"A family-party would be one of the most unpleasant things imaginable.

"Ask Mr. Rigby and one or two of the others."

"It is rather late," returned the Earl; "but I will send a note to Colonel Tench; he is quite a lady's man. And now Marcia I should like to see the rooms, if you please."

Lord Cradoc was delighted.

The bright rooms that overlooked the flower-gardens had been arranged for Daphne.

They were gay with flowers and beautiful pictures.

Everything was in harmony with Daphne's character, light, bright, and graceful.

"I can almost see her here," returned the Earl.

"She will harmonize with the rooms just as a rare gem harmonizes with its setting."

And then he went to the suite arranged for Irene, from the long wide windows of which there was a striking view of the ruins and the river.

"Marcia," cried the Earl, "I must congratulate you.

"You have 'fitted' each girl's character perfectly—and that to my mind is remarkable, as you have never seen them. These rooms will suit Irene admirably, as the others will Daphne.

"I can imagine Irene standing at the windows, watching the river and the ruins, and thinking to herself what a grand old place Poole is, loving it because it is one of the landmarks of history—for Irene's mind is always filled with noble thoughts. I am much very pleased."

He looked at the books lying on the table.

"Ah, you have Browning and Buchanan! What is this—Jean Ingelow? They will be here about half-past four.

"Let John take the carriage, and the tax-cart should go for the luggage.

"Of course you will have tea prepared for them."

"I will do everything to make them comfortable, Thane," she replied.

Then Lord Cradoc wrote his letters. He implored Mr. Rigby to come.

"If you are deeply engaged," he wrote, "you must come nevertheless. I look upon it more as business than anything else. I want to know the impression that each girl makes upon you. I think much of first impressions, and I know that yours are usually correct."

Mr. Rigby could not decline.

He himself felt the importance of the case.

In fact, to one so devoted as himself to the interests of the House of Cradoc it was momentous.

He sent a hastily-written answer to say that he would drive over to Poole as Lord Cradoc wished.

The servants had an idea that the coming visitors were not of the ordinary type. Grey had been butler in the old Earl's time, and the interests of his employers were his own; the housekeeper Esther Moore had been the present Earl's nurse.

Both were faithful devoted servants, who would have have laid down their lives for their lord.

Many and solemn were the consultations held in the housekeeper's room.

This visit, said Grey impressively, meant more than people thought; and he strongly advised Mrs. Moore to be prepared for anything.

The finest suites in the house had not been prepared, he felt sure, for any ordinary guests.

Strange events were about to happen; and Mrs. Moore who had loved the handsome boys as though they had been her own, wept bitterly as she thought of bad times that might be in store for Poole.

The anxious day wore on.

Never to Lady Marcia had hours seemed so long before.

She, finding that she could not settle down steadily to any occupation, had dressed for dinner early.

Lady Marcia had been very particular over her toilette.

She knew how much depended on first impressions.

She was still in deep mourning for her nephews.

Her silk was of the richest, and her crape of the finest.

On her luxuriant hair she wore a pretty white *crepe* head-dress.

Lady Marcia looked what she was, a perfect gentlewoman.

It was only just four.

The carriage had gone to the station, and Lady Marcia was pacing up and down the long drawing-room, impatient, restless, and distraught.

No second sight availed her now to foresee who would be Countess of Cradoc. No warning dream, no fleeting glance into the future, told her whether the golden head or the dark head would wear the crown of that little kingdom.

Lady Marcia was greatly relieved when she heard that Mr. Rigby had arrived.

She went to meet him with outstretched hands.

"You are really a friend in need," she said.

"I cannot tell you how nervous I am. It is very good of you to come so early."

"I knew from the Earl's letter that you would be in distress," he replied. "At what hour do you expect your guests?"

"About five o'clock," said Lady Marcia. "After living here quietly for so many months, with no companion save sorrow, to meet a brilliant circle of guests is almost too much for me.

"I am glad to say Colonel Tench is coming.

"To be candid Mr. Rigby, I rely implicitly on you and Colonel Tench to entertain Lady Ryeford.

"She is a woman of fashion and I dread her."

"I shall be only too pleased to help you in any way, Lady Marcia. Lady Ryeford? She was Annabel Hyde, I think."

"No, not Annabel; she was Eleanor Hyde.

"Annabel was Daphne's mother."

"Yes, I remember now. Has the Earl formed an opinion, do you know?"

Lady Marcia looked up at him with an air of helplessness which amused him.

"No, I do not think he has. Indeed he seems to me to be in love with both of them."

Well," remarked Mr. Rigby, "I can quite imagine that, if the girls are both beautiful and charming, he will have some difficulty in making a choice."

"He must choose her who appears best fitted for the post," said Lady Marcia; and then she exclaimed, "Oh, Mr. Rigby, I feel sure I hear the distant sound of carriage-wheels!"

CHAPTER VIII.

LADY MARCIA threw off her nervous fear and went into the hall. A tall handsome woman, richly dressed, came forward with outstretched hands.

"You must be Lady Marcia Hyde," she said.

"I am Lady Ryeford."

They shook hands, and then Lady Ryeford called "Irene!"

A tall beautiful girl with dark lustrous eyes came forward.

"This is my daughter Irene," said Lady Ryeford.

A charming smile lighted up her face as Irene returned Lady Marcia's kind words of greeting; and when she saw that smile Lady Marcia was impressed, even as the Earl had been.

Then there was a little stir in the group. Lady Ryeford stood aside, Irene drew nearer to Lady Marcia, and there came towards her another tall beautiful girl, with a face as fair as a seraph's and a glorious light in her blue eyes; her golden hair was a halo round her face, and no smile could have been sweeter than that which she gave to Lady Marcia.

"You are Lady Marcia Hyde," she said quickly.

"I should have known you anywhere, Lord Cradoc described you so well. I am Daphne Erlecote."

"You are most welcome to Poole," said Lady Marcia, with an admiring look at the radiant young face with its tender rose-bloom.

At that moment she began to realize how difficult a task the Earl had before him.

With a look of bewilderment, she turned from one girl to other.

"We made acquaintance with Miss Erlecote at the station," explained Lady Ryeford.

"We came on by the same train from Leyton Bridge."

"You must be very tired after your journey," said Lady Marcia.

"Well, for my part, I am," replied Lady Ryeford.

"If I may venture to suggest what I should really like, Lady Marcia, it would be a cup of tea in my own room."

"You shall have it at once," said Lady Marcia graciously.

"My maid will attend to my unpacking, and then to Irene's," said Lady Ryeford.

Lady Marcia turned to Daphne.

"You have brought no maid with you, dear child," she said; "but I have provided one.

"She is a Parisian, and her name is Aline.

"I think you will like her."

"My maid is also a Parisian," remarked Lady Ryeford; "and she is wonderfully clever at hairdressing, dressmaking, and everything of the kind."

"So is the maid I have engaged for Miss Erlecote," said Lady Marcia.

Then, anxious to pay her guests every attention, Lady Marcia insisted upon showing Lady Ryeford to her room herself.

Mrs. Moore, the housekeeper, was requested to show the young ladies to their rooms, and to bring Aline, the Parisian maid with her.

No remark was made as the little procession passed up the broad handsome staircase.

It was of fine white marble, with an exquisitely-carved balustrade and elegant standard lamps and flower-stands.

Lady Ryeford's heart beat with exultation as she gazed upon the splendor of this palatial house; her face flushed and her eyes grew bright.

Irene was equal to the occasion, but sweet Daphne looked round half awed, and wondered if there were many such earthly paradises as this.

"I hope," said Lady Marcia, before leaving her guest, "that you will find everything comfortable and as you like it."

"It looks very charming," answered Lady Ryeford.

"If there should be anything wanting, my maid will see to it. Ah," she added to herself, when Lady Marcia had left the room and the door was shut, "I begin to understand!

"The first person I must thoroughly master must be this calm well-bred Lady Marcia Hyde."

After a brief space, a maid brought in a tea-service of exquisite Dresden china; and as Lady Ryeford sat sipping the fragrant beverage, she thought how pleasant it was, after a long voyage on a stormy sea, to be safe in harbor at last.

And why should she not remain there for some time?

If Lady Marcia had a comfortable home there, why should not she also?

Surely she, who was by birth a Hyde, had a far better claim to the grandeurs of this ancestral home than Lady Marcia Hyde who was related only by marriage?

She, with her knowledge of life her accomplishments, her grace of manner, her skill in managing everybody and everything—surely she would make a far better mistress for Poole than Lady Marcia?

"I must see," she mused with a complacent smile.

"It strikes me that it will be my own fault if I leave this place again."

She was well satisfied with the rooms allotted to her.

They were spacious and luxuriously furnished.

As she sat sipping her tea and gazing dreamily at the fire, and watching Henriette as she put away the rich costumes, she sighed deeply—a sigh of relief and appreciation.

"Ah, madame," said the maid, pausing in the midst of her occupation, "this is a palace!

"Never have I seen such wealth, luxury, comfort."

In the meantime Mrs. Moore had shown the two young ladies to their respective rooms.

Daphne had at once hastened to the flowers; they seemed to her, amongst all the unwonted grandeur, like old friends.

"How beautiful!" she cried.

"I am sure that the Earl has remembered how much I love flowers. How good of him!"

Mrs. Moore's worn face brightened; she liked to hear her master praised.

"His lordship is good to every one, miss," she said.

"The pity is that he has had to suffer so much."

And from that moment her heart warmed to the young lady whose first feeling was one of gratitude to her master.

When Mrs. Moore entered Irene's room, she found her standing by the window overlooking the ruins, her face aglow with enthusiasm.

"What a glorious place!" she cried.

"How Lord Cradoc must love it! No wonder he is proud of his name and his race."

"A lady," thought the old housekeeper, "and a proud one—an aristocrat. The first thing that strikes her is the grandeur of the place.

"I do not know which I like best. The fair young lady is most like the Cradocs; but this one with her dark hair and eyes is like a princess."

As every one else, good Mrs. Moore was puzzled as to which of the two she preferred.

The Earl had not felt equal to the task of meeting them, though wishful to show all honor to Lady Ryeford.

To him it was not the arrival of ordinary guests, but to young girls one of whom must take his dear boy Alaric's place.

He went out, leaving with Lady Marcia a message to the effect that he was compelled to be absent on business, but hoped to be back before dinner; and in the meantime he buried himself in the woods and gave way to his grief.

Mr. Rigby and Colonel Tench had been enjoying a short discussion, when the drawing-room door opened and the ladies entered the room.

Lady Marcia, hastened to make all the needful introductions.

Lady Ryeford, dressed in the best possible taste—rich heavy silk relieved by trimmings of pale lavender—was pleased with Colonel Tench.

They were soon in animated conversation; and the Colonel pronounced her ladyship in his own mind to be a "monstrously fine woman," while she thought him one of the courtliest men she had ever met.

The lawyer confined himself exclusively to the young ladies. He was charmed with them.

First golden-haired Daphne, fair as a summer morning, radiant with smiles, came towards him extending a slender hand. The old lawyer's heart beat as it had never beaten for years.

"This must be the Countess," thought he. "There surely can be no doubt."

Before he could recover himself, Mr. Rigby was bowing before a tall, beautiful slender girl of noble bearing and royal carriage.

Dark lustrous eyes were looking graciously into his; ruby lips smiled upon him; a low rich voice murmured pleasant greeting.

"This must be she," he thought. "I must have been mistaken. This girl is by nature a queen."

And, in sober truth, the honest lawyer was as perplexed and helpless as those who had asked him to come to their assistance.

The Earl took down Lady Ryeford to dinner.

Colonel Tench found courage to escort Irene.

Sir Arthur Markham, another visitor, took Daphne; while Lady Marcia fell to the lot of Mr. Rigby.

The Earl did not enter the drawing-room until two or three minutes before the dinner-bell rang.

Mr. Rigby watched him keenly, thinking that he might, from his manner to the two girls, be able to discover which he liked best—but without avail.

Daphne hastened to meet him with outstretched hands; and as he went to kiss her, the lawyer clearly saw tears in his eyes.

But, when he went from her to Irene, his face lighted up with an expression such as the old lawyer had never seen on his face before.

The conversation during dinner never flagged.

The Earl threw off the terrible depression that had seized him.

Lady Ryeford was charmed.

No better judge of such matters lived than she.

The serving of that dinner, the grand old plate, the fine damask, the exquisite glass, delighted her very heart.

She was an excellent judge of wine too; and Lord Cradoc was famous for his cellar. Her ladyship appraised all these things, for she knew their exact value.

Everything was perfect.

She acknowledged to herself that Lady Marcia Hyde must be a good manager at least.

Mr. Rigby was engrossed in watching the two young ladies.

He found them both refined, graceful, well-bred; but, as for saying which he liked best, that was impossible.

"I am glad," thought the lawyer to himself, "that the responsibility of choice does not rest with me.

"I should never decide. But it is not likely," he reflected, "that they are as evenly balanced in mind and character as they are in personal charms; and, after all, it is character and not appearance which must regulate the choice."

All agreed that it was a very pleasant dinner.

When desert was over, and Lady Marcia gave the signal for the withdrawal of the ladies, the gentlemen quite regretted losing such charming companions.

Then all gathered round the host. All had but one story to tell of fervent admiration of the beautiful girls whose interests were so closely allied yet so diametrically opposed.

Colonel Tench and Sir Arthur Markham, who had both known the Earl's sons, were greatly struck with Daphne's resemblance to the lost heir Alaric.

"They might have been brother and sister," said Colonel Tench to the Earl.

"Have you a good portrait of your eldest son?" he asked.

"Yes.

"Before my boys started on that last fatal tour, I had an excellent portrait taken of both.

"They are in the picture-gallery here."

"I should like to see them," said Colonel Tench.

"To tell you the truth," replied the Earl, "although I am ashamed to avow myself such a coward I have never looked at them since my boys were lost."

"I should like to see Miss Erlecote by the painting; she must resemble it greatly."

"We will go into the picture-gallery after coffee," said the Earl. "She certainly is very much like my boy."

"She has the same intonation of voice, the same laugh, as Lord Hyde," remarked Mr. Rigby; and in his own mind he decided that this was quite enough to assure her the preference.

[TO BE CONTINUED]

About Nothing.

BY BLAKE PAXSON.

HE'S a very agreeable peaceful-behaved young gentleman," said Mrs. Prodgers rubbing her hands with the motion peculiar to stout middle-aged boarding-house keepers, "not a bit particular as to what he eats, and as regular with his week's board as the Saturday afternoon comes round."

"But who is he?" said Mr. Majilton, who having no especial business of his own, was so good as to identify himself with that of his neighbors, and formed, in his sole individuality, the Star Chamber and the judge jury, and executioner of the vicinity, speaking from a social standpoint.

"That is the question, ma'am—who is he?

"Regular payments and agreeable manners are a good deal. I'm willing to allow; but what are his conventional endorsements?"

Mrs. Prodgers looked puzzled.

"I am told," resumed Mr. Majilton, "Mr. Eugene Aram had the polished mien of a gentleman."

"Sir!" said Mrs. Prodgers.

"And the Nihilists themselves probably have their social code."

"I am not acquainted with the family of whom you speak, sir," said Mrs. Prodgers; "I've had a good many boarders in my time, but never anybody by that name."

Mr. Majilton rubbed his nose in some irritation.

"Never mind," said he; "never mind. Details are of no importance.

"It's the general principle that we must look to."

"Certainly, sir," said Mrs. Prodgers, more bewildered than ever.

"And you tell me you haven't any idea of Mr. Guymard's profession?"

Mrs. Prodgers shook her head.

"What references did he bring?" pursued the querist.

"Well, sir, now you remind me of it," said the honest woman, "he didn't mention no especial references.

"He merely said that he should probably want the rooms all the summer, and would pay in advance, and he gave me a month's rent in gold, on the spot."

"This looks very bad," said Mr. Majilton "very bad, indeed.

"For all you know, Mrs. Prodgers, you may be harboring a political spy, a forger, a counterfeiter.

"Lowering his voice to a tragical undertone, a mur-r-derer!"

"Good gracious, Mr. Majilton, don't talk in that blood-curdling way," said Mrs. Prodgers, wringing her hands; "and him so little trouble and so regular with his pay."

"Ah, the selfishness of this world—the selfishness of this world," sighed Mr. Majilton, casting his gooseberry-colored eyes upwards.

"You seem to forget, Mrs. Prodgers, that you owe something to your neighbors and the world in general, as well as to yourself."

Mrs. Prodgers got out her handkerchief, and shed a few tears behind its folds.

How could she tell this high-minded philanthropist that the neighbors and the world in general had never helped her to gain her hard-earned livelihood?

What were her poor little private interests to the grand and colossal view of society taken by Mr. Majilton, who had a snug little income of his own, and needed not to track out the course of every penny with microscopic eagerness?

"What do you suppose General Gerard would say to this culpable carelessness of yours?" he resumed.

"Mrs. Dalrymple, whose fair lovely daughters represent the beauty and talent of the neighborhood?"

"I'm sure I'm sorry," sniffed the poor boarding-house keeper, "but——"

"Sorry!" echoed Mr. Majilton.

"But of what avail will be your sorrow when once you have introduced a serpent into these Eden bowers?

"No, Mrs. Prodgers, I have no desire, believe me, to wound your feelings: I merely desire you to be a little more cautious in your dealings with the world in general. Here's this great diamond robbery at Palace Heights—Miss Duponceau's ancestral jewels gone like a vision.

"How do we know that your model boarder may not be the head and front of the adept gang who perpetrated this outrage?

"Good heavens, madam! I've looked up my collection of postage-stamps and rare coins every evening since I heard of the diamond robbery at the Palace."

"Oh, sir, I'm quite certain," stammered Mrs. Prodgers, "that Mr. Guymard isn't one of that kind to——"

"And I read, only last evening, in the paper," inexorably pursued Mr. Majilton, "of a gigantic plot to fire all the coal-mines of Cornwall, and set the Norfolk woods in a blaze.

"Am I by any means sure that this mysterious stranger, whom you have so injudiciously admitted into our midst, is not the diabolical wretch whose fiendish ingenuity is responsible for all this crime?"

"Dear, dear," said Mrs. Prodgers.

"Suppose I see him?" said Mr. Majilton authoritatively.

"I can easily introduce myself, and ——"

"But you can't, sir," cried the poor landlady.

"He's just took the express to London to be gone all day, and I've got the whitewasher and the carpet-beater here, and Bridget, with a pail of hot water and scouring-soap——"

"Oh," said Mr. Majilton, "it's very unfortunate—very."

"Perhaps you would like to look at his room, sir?" suggested Mrs. Prodgers.

"Well, it wouldn't do any harm for me just to glance around a little," said Mr. Majilton.

And with a majestic stride he followed Mrs. Prodgers into the apartment of the city boarder.

The whitewasher was mixing a mixture maelstrom of white foam in his pail.

Bridget, mounted upon a step-ladder, was dusting the books, which were ranged, not without artistic elegance and taste, on home constructed shelves.

At the sight of the house-cleaning phalanx every domestic impulse was roused in Mrs. Prodger's nature.

"Bridget," he cried shrilly, "have you commenced on those books without cleaning this closet?"

"Please, 'm," retorted Bridget, "the closet was cram-jam full of things, as I didn't venture to take the liberty to move."

"It's only dressing-gowns, and fencing-gloves, and such like," said Mrs. Prodgers.

"Please, 'm, there's a false face there," argued Bridget, "and ten boxes, as I didn't know but they might be full of spirits of nitre and glycerine."

"Nonsense," said Mrs. Prodgers, herself plunging into the depths of the closet, while Mr. Majilton peered cautiously over her shoulder.

"Spirits of nitre and glycerine indeed!

"I never heard such folly in all my life."

"A mask, eh?" said Mr. Majilton.

"It looks bad—very bad!

"And a black serge cloak with a large hood!

"Indeed!

"And where's the dark lantern and the false keys?"

"There ain't any, sir," said Mrs. Prodgers.

"There must be," said Mr. Majilton.

"Don't tell me!

"In this world one thing invariably leads to another, and—eh, what is that?"

It was a little flat Japanese box, which had fallen from the folds of the suspicious serge cloak.

"Dear, dear!" said Mrs. Prodgers, "how could I be so careless?

"It is providential, ma'am—quite providential," uttered Mr. Majilton, as he solemnly opened the box.

And out dropped a string of sparkling stones.

"Lor'-a-mussy!" said the whitewasher.

"The saints betune us and all harm!" said Bridget.

"If it ain't diamonds," cried Mrs. Prodgers.

"Didn't I tell you so?" said Mr. Majilton.

"Let this respectable person be sent to Palace Heights at once.

"Tell Bridget here to make all the haste she can to the nearest constabulary force.

"As for you, Mrs. Prodgers, I will trouble you to write out a description of this cold-blooded ruffian.

"While you are thus engaged I will scribble off a telegram that he may be arrested the very instant that he steps off the train.

"This is really—ahem!—what one may call a direct interposition of Providence."

"Oh, dear! oh, dear!" cried Mrs. Prodgers, wringing her hands, "has it come to this?

"And Mr. Guymard so civil-spoken and gentlemanly, and all."

"Pray remember, my good woman," adjured Mr. Majilton, "that time is of the first importance.

"Get a pencil and paper immediately.

"George," to the carpet-beating youth who was standing by, all eyes and ears, "run with this telegram to the office, and let it be charged to my account.

"And in the meantime, Mrs. Prodgers, let us have a circumstantial and minute description of this wolf in sheep's clothing who has thus entered our fold."

But Mrs. Prodgers's few little wits were entirely frightened out of her, and she could not at a moment's notice remember the items of Mr. Guymard's personal appearance.

And the more impatient Mr. Majilton waxed the more bewildered she became, so that the carriage from Palace Heights, and the box-wagon from the police-court were both at the door before she had decided whether Mr. Guymard's eyes were dark grey, or light blue, his nose aquiline or Romanesque.

Miss Duponceau, from the Heights, looked around her in amazement.

The constable eyed poor Mrs. Prodgers as if he meant to arrest her at once.

Mr. Majilton began in four-syllabled words to explain the situation to the gentry from Palace Heights, whose acquaintance he had long yearned for an opportunity of making, and presently the complication of affairs was rendered more hopeless still by the unexpected appearance upon the scene of Mr. Guymard himself.

"Don't be alarmed, Mrs. Prodgers," he said cheerfully; "but I discovered at Chatham Junction that I had left some important papers behind, and—but pray what is the meaning of all this?"

And he looked around him in extreme amazement at the little crowd, the disorganized closets, the japanned box on the table with its sparkling contents.

"Villain!" cried Mr. Majilton, "your machinations are discovered at last.

"Constable, arrest the man.

"Miss Duponceau, let me be the fortunate instrument of returning to you your diamond necklace, which yonder abandoned scoundrel has——"

"But he isn't an abandoned scoundrel," said Miss Duponceau; "he's my cousin Charles.

"And these things aren't diamonds at all but miserable glass stones, not worth a cent."

"Eh?" cried Mr. Majilton, his lower jaw dropping in dismay.

Mr. Guymard looked keenly around.

"It seems to me, Mrs. Prodgers," said he "that there has been a great deal of unnecessary meddling here."

"But what does this disguise mean?" questioned Mr. Majilton faintly.

"It is my masquerade dress," said Guymard carelessly, "for Miss Duponceau's ball; and the necklace of cheap stage jewels was intended to accompany it."

"Who are you?" demanded Majilton. "In the interests of the village, I have a right to ask this question."

"A right which I don't in the least recognize," coolly returned Guymard.

"But there is no reason why I should decline to state that my name is Charles Guymard.

"I am a lawyer, and that I am lodging with this good woman because I want quiet and privacy while I am engaged in studying up the details of an important will case.

"If you want any other particulars, I can only refer you to my cousin, Miss Duponceau, who was quite aware of my residence here, as well as cognizant of its reasons."

Miss Duponceau burst into a clear musical laugh.

"The idea of taking my cousin Charles for a burglar!" she cried out.

"Really there is no end to the absurdity of these good people.

"But, now that the carriage is here, Charles, I shall insist upon taking you back to the Heights with me.

"Mrs. Prodgers is very kind, I am sure; but, after what has happened, this place can hardly be a home for you any longer."

So Mrs. Prodgers lost her boarder; the constable slunk away, trying to hide his handcuffs under his coat-tails as he went; Mr. Majilton departed, looking like a barn door chanticleer who has been out in the rain; and the Palace Heights people considered the whole matter as an excellent joke.

But the detective policeman who waited at the station for the train, and didn't find his prisoner after all, did not participate in that opinion.

And neither did Mr. Majilton, when the bills came in for his little piece of officiousness.

It is more than probable that he will mind his own business for the future.

THE TWO LABORERS.—Two men I honor, and no third. First, the toil-worn craftsman that with earth-made implements laboriously conquers the earth and makes her man's. Venerable to me is the hard hand, wherein lies a cunning virtue; venerable is the rugged face, weather-tanned, with its rude intelligence, for it is the face of a man living manlike. Toil on; thou art in thy duty, be out of it who may. Thou toilest for the altogether indispensable—for daily bread. A second man I honor, and still more highly; him who is seen toiling for the spiritually indispensable—not daily bread but the bread of life. Is not he, too, in his duty, with Heaven-made implements, conquering Heaven for us? If the humble toil that we may have food, must not the high and glorious toil for him in return, that he may have light and guidance, freedom and immortality? These two, in all their degrees, I honor; all else is chaff and dust, which let the wind blow whither it listeth. Unspeakably touching however, is it, when I find both dignities united, and he that must toil outwardly for the lowest of man's wants, is also toiling inwardly for the highest.

CARLYLE.

EARLY FATTENING.—It is quite as important to fatten and market economically, the animal products of the farm, as it is to raise them. A pound of beef, pork, or poultry, can be made much cheaper than later in the season, when a larger part of the rations must go to keep up animal heat.

There is no sleight of hand in laying fat upon an animal's carcass. It must come out of good honest food in the rations fed. The temperature in the latter part of summer and early autumn, is in favor of the best use of all the fattening articles of food, while there is enough of green food to sharpen the appetite, and keep up good digestion.

Bric-a-Brac.

ABLE TO KEEP QUIET.—At a banquet the ambassador desired the wise men to deliver, every one of them, some sentence or parable, that he might report to his king, which they did: only one was silent, which the ambassador perceiving, said to him, 'Sir, let it not displease you; why do you not say something that I may report?' He answered, 'Report to your lord that there are those that can hold their peace.'

THE NUMBER OF PLANTS.—Comparatively few plants were known to the ancients, progress in botanical knowledge having made wonderful additions to the catalogue in recent years. According to a German authority, Hippocrates described 234 species, Theophrastus followed with 500, and, as nearly as can be ascertained, Pliny knew 800. Even as recently as the date of Linnæus' death, 1778, only 7294 had been described, although Tournefort had claimed 10,146. Early in the present century De Candolle made 30,000 named species, and Lindley, in 1853, placed the number at 93,-920. At the present time nearly 150,000 species are known, and it is quite possible that twice as many actually exist.

THE IRISH HARP.—The old style Irish harp was about four feet high, had no pedals, and was strung to the back with straps. The one belonging to King Brian Boru, killed in the battle of Clontarf, in 1014, still exists in the museum of Trinity College, Dublin. It is black with age and polished, but now worm-eaten, and is adorned with silver ornaments. It was taken by his son, Teague, to Rome after the battle and presented to the Pope, with the crown and regalia. A succeeding Pope presented it to Henry VIII, with the title of Defender of the Faith, and Henry gave it to the Earl of Clanricarde, in whose family it was held until the beginning of the eighteenth century. It then passed through several hands until 1786, when the college became its owner.

A CAT ASYLUM.—Of all the curious charitable institutions in the world, the most curious, probably, is the cat asylum at Aleppo, which is attached to one of the mosques of that city. It was founded by a misanthropic old Turk, who, being possessed of large granaries, was much annoyed by rats and mice, to rid himself of which, he employed a legion of cats. The felines rendered him such effectual service that he left them a sum in the Turkish funds, with strict injunctions that all destitute and sickly cats should be provided for till they were able to provide for themselves. In 1845, when a famine was raging in North Syria, and scores of poor people were dying from want, men were daily seen carrying away sack-loads of cats, to be fed on the proceeds of the old Turk's last will and testament.

QUEER STOCKS.—A gentleman near Winchester made a rockery in front of his house, in which he planted some beautiful ferns, and, having put up the following notice, found it more efficient and less expensive than spring-guns or man-traps. The fear-inspiring inscription was, "Beggars beware; Scolopendriums and Polypodiums are set here." The wall of a gentleman's house near Edinburgh some years since exhibited a board on which was painted a threat quite as difficult for the trespasser to understand as the preceding: "Any person entering these enclosures will be shot and prosecuted." An eccentric old gentleman placed in a field on his estate a board with the following generous offer painted thereon: "I will give this field to any man who is contented." It was not long before he had an applicant. "Well, my man, are you a contented fellow?"—"Yes, sir; very."—"Then why do you want my field?" The applicant did not wait to reply.

A MOVING HILL.—The Poet Laureate has told us that the "hills are shadows and they flow from form to form, and nothing stands;" and his words have a very practical illustration in a rambling dune of sand situated in the eastern part of Churchill County, Nevada. The hill is about four miles long by one wide, and from 100 to 400 feet high. It comprises millions of tons of sand, each particle no bigger than a pin's head, and so soft and clean withal, that it will find its way out of a sack if jolted. The mountain, we are told, is so dense that the sand gives a musical sound under the footfall, and often a bird lighting on it, or a lizard running along the slopes, dislodges a train of sand which slides downward with a hum resembling the vibration of a telegraph wire. The whole hill is slowly travelling from west to east under the shifting action of the wind blowing over it. From the time it was first discovered, several years ago, until now, it appears to have moved about a mile.

A HINT TO SICK NURSES.—Ladies went to the front in great numbers during the Zulu War. With difficulty were many restrained from working at the hospital at Rorke's Drift, before the defence of that place on January 22, 1879. There was opening enough for their energy and patience in the hospitals nearer Pietermaritzburg and in that town. Some of the nurses were wise and some foolish: some few were careless; most were over-anxious that their patients should eat—should rouse themselves when lethargic, and sleep when inclined to look about and talk: and all were of one mind that the patient should be constantly bathed with water or with scent. 'Poor fellow!' I heard one lady say, while tears of compassion stood in her eyes; 'poor fellow, you are suffering! It will relieve you if I wash your face.' The young fellow said nothing until his nurse had sponged his face; and then he turned to the wall with a groan, and muttered, 'That's the ninth lady done it to day.'

TWIN BORN.

BY MARION BERNSTEIN.

Two roses hung in the purple eve
  In the glow of the golden sun;
And the shadow crept in each crimson heart
  When the summer's day was done.

But one was dead when the morning came,
  Down-trodden by careless feet;
In the light of the moon its petals fair
  Had yielded their fragrance sweet.

But the other bloomed in the garden air
  Like a maid with a blushing face,
In the midst of the dew-kissed blossoms fair
  It hung with a royal grace.

A lesson of life I learn from these—
  A thought that was bitter sweet,
As I gazed on the rose that bloomed above—
  And the blossoms that lay at my feet.

Twin-born are the flowers of hope and love,
  As they bloom in the purple eve;
Who knows when the golden day is done,
  What shadows the night will weave?

In the crimson heart of the fairest rose
  The shadow of death may lie;
And the hope that lives in the golden day
  In the gloom of the night may die.

Twin-born are the thought and the lives of men,
  Twin-born are the hopes of the heart;
But the morning that comes with its crimson glow
  Sees them faded and far apart.

A FALSE FRIEND.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "BARBARA GRAHAM," "ALMOST SACRIFICED," "MABEL MAY," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER VI. [CONTINUED.]

"SHE will stay now," thinks Beauchamp. "I must begin now; besides, she deserves a reward for staying so long with me.

"Generally she is off like lightning before a fellow can say ten words to her, and then it has all to begin over again the next time."

Then he says aloud—"Sophie, did any one ever tell you you are very beautiful?"

"No," she answers, startled into looking at him.

"But you know it," he says softly.

"No," she replied again simply. And it is true she does not.

"Well, then, you are," he whispers.

The hot blood flushes the girl's face from brow to chin.

"And you must know it," he adds presently.

"I don't," she cries eagerly.

"I know that Alice and Gabriel Allington, are beautiful, and I know I am not a bit like either."

"I should rather think not!"—with a short laugh.

"Alice Selden is pretty enough—good eyes and a pretty smile.

"As for Gabriel Allington, the only pretty thing that young woman has is her name. Pale-faced, hollow-eyed spectre! Neither of them could hold a candle to you, little girl."

She is silent a moment, thinking, and he is silent a moment, watching her.

When she speaks he is rather surprised at her words.

"Then you do not think Gabriel beautiful?" she asks, with something almost beseeching in her tone.

She would rather a great deal, it seems to him, hear the fiat pronounced that Miss Allington was not pretty, than hear it decided by competent judges that she herself possessed the beauty of a Venus.

"No," he answers emphatically.

"The whole of Gabriel Allington, and every other girl I have ever seen, is not as beautiful as this little hand."

He has taken the little hand as he speaks, and holds it in his own.

"May I?" he asks, looking up at her suddenly.

She, not understanding, looks back at him with frank clear eyes.

He smiles a little, and, bending his handsome head, presses his lips to her hand.

Richard is walking up the garden-walk to them.

Something in his morning rounds has evidently put him out. His honest clear eyes are clouded, and he frowns a little.

"See," cries Harold gaily—"your medical assistant, Miss Sophie, has prescribed a morning-walk for me, and here I am!"

"Yes," says Richard absently.

"You didn't come to meet me, Sophie"—with a quick earnest glance at her crimson face.

"No, I didn't feel inclined," she answers lazily.

Richard turns abruptly to Beauchamp.

"Better not overdo it the first day, Harold," he says gravely.

"I assure you, Richard, it has not done him a bit of harm," cries Sophie, anxious to justify her doctoring.

"No, I don't suppose it has," Richard answers, in a dry tone she has never heard from him before, and that she does not like now.

"Anyhow, Beauchamp, let me help you back to the house."

"Sophie has promised to help me; haven't you?" cries Harold, appealing to her.

"Oh, nonsense—that child!" begins Richard testily.

"Yes, I took you out, and I will take you in," she says, rising and giving him his stick. "Now come."

So down the path they go together, Harold's thin white fingers resting on her slight young shoulder, and, the path being narrow, Richard Selden has to walk behind with the best grace he can muster. But he does not look very pleased at the wonderful progress his patient is making.

CHAPTER VII.

THE sunshiny warm days that gladdened the world in February have disappeared, and March comes in with blinding sleet and snow and cruel, whistling winds that moan in the passages and come rushing in at the doors.

So long as the bright mornings lasted, Harold Beauchamp took his little morning stroll on the sunny walk, with Sophie acting as crutch.

She filled this position with ready amiability, that made Alice smile, remembering her professions of ardent hatred towards their guest.

Now the rain and cold keep them indoors—all except Richard, who has his patients to visit, no matter what the weather may be. Perhaps no man ever possessed a greater talent of amusing than Harold, and he uses his talent to the utmost.

He reads aloud as Alice works and Sophie paints. He plays for them exquisite melodies from Chopin, or grand harmonies of Beethoven.

He sings to them sweet German *"lieder"* or quaint old English ballads. In the twilight, round the drawing-room fire, they listen entranced to his picturesque accounts of his wanderings and adventures.

Doctor Selden very seldom of late honors the little group with his presence.

Harold has been here six weeks now. He has not got much stronger as yet. His hands are very thin and white, and his cheeks very hollow. But his spirits are ever gay and cheery.

Alice often wonders how he can be so, as she has a pretty accurate knowledge of his pecuniary affairs.

Richard has told her a little; but he has not told her how much has gone out of his private pocket to remedy those same affairs.

She does not know that it was Richard's hard-earned money that paid for him in the hospital in Germany, that settled the most urgent of his debts, that brought him to England and established him safely at the cottage.

It may be thinking of these money-worries that makes Doctor Selden not quite so agreeable in his home-circle as he used to be.

"What fearful snow! See how it drives before the wind," says Harold lazily, as he lies back among the soft sofa-cushions and clasps his white hands above his head.

"I am glad I have not to face it, Miss Selden, but that I am in such a charming cosy retreat as the cottage. Where's Selden? Is he out?"

"I don't know where he is," answers Alice.

"I don't think he has gone out. I hope he has not. Run and look for him, Sophie."

Sophie puts quickly on with an affected air.

At this instant the door opens, and Richard comes in.

"Talk of the *et-cetera*," says Harold, laughing. "We were just wondering where you had hidden yourself. You don't give us a very generous allowance of your society, Selden."

"I was writing in the study," says Richard briefly.

"Sophie was just going to look for you," remarks Alice, counting the stitches in the shawl she is knitting.

Richard turns to the little figure in blue serge.

A smile dawns on his face.

"No, I wasn't," she says shortly, without looking up; and the smile disappears.

He turns from her and walks slowly to the fireside.

Harold strokes his drooping moustache and seems puzzled for something to say.

"What a very pretty color your work is, Miss Selden!" he hazards.

"I am puzzling myself to know what it is going to develop into."

"A little shawl for house-wear," she replies.

"Not for yourself?

"That shade would not suit you, I think" for he is a connoisseur in such matters.

"No.

"It is for Gabriel Allington."

Sophie raises her head at the mention of Gabriel Allington, and looks towards the group at the fireside.

Richard finds her eyes fixed upon him with a curious questioning expression.

It is the first time their eyes have met for days.

He crosses the room quickly and stands beside her, looking down at the little swift working hands.

"What are you doing there?" he asks in a would-be cheerful tone.

"Snowdrops," she answers briefly.

"Sophie," he whispers, laying his hand on hers and keeping it prisoner, "why have you been so rude and unkind to me during these last weeks?

"What have I done to you?"

"What an imagination you have!" she answers, laughing a little unsteadily.

"I am not in the least changed to you.

"What nonsense you talk!"

"It is no nonsense," he says gravely.

"Do you think I am blind or a fool? Not once since I came home have you been the same to me.

"Never have I seen my little child Sophie, that was so bright and merry, and loved me, or seemed to love me so much.

"What has come between us, my child?"

He thinks he knows; but he cannot give his thoughts words.

She could tell him that the change had begun before he went away to Germany.

If each could have read the other's hidden thoughts, what sorrow might have been spared them both!

She makes no answer to his last words, only tries to release her hand from his close kind clasp.

"Will you not even let me touch your hand?" he asks, deeply hurt.

He has already noticed that the child never gives him now her innocent "Good night" and "Good morning" kiss.

He has said nothing about it, but he cannot help a reproach rising to his lips when she will not let him so much as touch her hand.

"I want to go on with my work," she says petulantly.

He turns and leaves her; and, as he walks away, two large bright tears fall upon her paper, thereby ruining one most artistic ivy spray.

Harold has seen this by-play, even to the two great tears, and he strokes his moustache again, one might almost think with an air of complacency.

A servant enters the room with the afternoon tea-tray, and bearing also a note for the Doctor.

"It is from Gabriel Allington," he says. "Her father is not at all well, and wants me."

What a very curious thing for Sophie to shade off snowdrops with crimson lake!

"Selfish old man!" says Alice reproachfully.

"He just wants some one to amuse him this dreary day, so he sends for you. I don't believe he is a bit ill. Don't go, Richard.

"You may be sure all he wants is a gossip and a game of chess."

"I am quite sure that is all," returns her brother a little wearily; "but I must go, all the same."

"Why?" demurs Alice.

"You are not to go out in such weather as this just for an old man's whims.

"If I thought he was really ill; but——"

"But, Alice my dear," he returns, with a significant glance, "you know I must humor the Squire a bit.

"It may be all whims, and is too; but I can't help that.

"I owe him"—more money than I can conveniently pay just now," he was going to say; but, remembering the presence of Harold, for whose sake that money had been borrowed, he adds hastily, "every respect and consideration possible."

"In the light of a future papa-in-law," drawls Harold who has sauntered over to superintend the shading of the snowdrops, and is secretly amused to see the horrible objects Sophie is portraying.

Richard does not hear this *sotto voce* remark. In fact no one hears it except the person it was meant for.

Alice understands her brother, and is silent.

"Don't forget your great coat," she says.

"And I suppose he will keep you for dinner?"

"I suppose so," answers Richard a little drearily.

Long ago a certain small person used to get him his coat, and help him on with it, and go to the door to see him off, and call after him not to stay long.

When these attentions were lavished on him, he had not particularly noticed or valued them, but now that they have ceased, he regrets them.

"*Au revoir*," calls Harold gaily after him as he leaves the room.

"Good-bye," says Richard, in a curt tone.

Meanwhile, Sophie is having a battle with her pride and her inclination.

"What a wretch I am!" she mutters, dashing away at random.

"And yet I can't help it. How can I be the same to him as I used to be when he does not care about me the same? He is always thinking of her, morning, noon, and night.

"See how he flies off to her now in this fearful weather! If he didn't care for her, would he go off at an old man's whim?

"Why does he owe him so much respect and consideration, if not as her father, I should like to know?

"But, after all, I ought to be polite to him. Is he not my benefactor as much now as then?

"Only for him, I suppose, I should be now in a charity-school, or perhaps all ready gone out to a situation as scullery-maid.

"I'll go and see if I can help him, and say good-bye at least."

She finds him in the hall, struggling into his great coat.

"Let me help you," she says quite humbly, going up to him.

Richard turns and regards her with surprise and delight.

"Why, I thought you were too busy painting," he cries eagerly.

"Why, I believe I have always come to hinder you, when you were going out, and make myself generally disagreeable," she says, with an unsteady smile.

"Always," he answers, looking his bright cheery self again.

"But I thought the good old times were gone for ever."

"Oh, don't flatter yourself that you have got rid of your bother!" she rejoins lightly.

"I thought she had developed from a most teasing child into a most proper young lady," he says mockingly.

"Well, and did you not like the change?" she demands, buttoning his coat with fingers that tremble a little.

"Not at all," he rejoins promptly.

"But you know it is time.

"I am long past seventeen now—quite half past.

"I should be getting more like a young lady. Gabriel is quiet and ladylike—I should be like her."

"Yes, perhaps; but I should advise you not to set yourself that as an end and aim," he answers, catching the two little hands and holding them against his breast.

"I can't imagine your ever turning yourself into anything even remotely resembling Gabriel."

"No, I suppose not," she says, trying to take away her hands.

He feels how she endeavors to release herself, and instantly sets her free.

"Well, I must be off!" he says, his face clouding again.

"Good-bye.

"Run in out of the cold, child."

"In such a hurry to be off to her!" she thinks, watching the tall figure disappear down the snowy avenue, battling against the storm as he went.

"And I am always 'child.'"

"Castle-building and romance weaving!" murmurs a soft voice behind her.

"But what a cheerless position to take up for the purpose!

"Your visions will not be '*couleur de rose*' with such a dreary gray out-look.

"Come to the fire inside, and build them there.

"I will help you."

"I am not castle-building, Mr. Beauchamp," she answers, coming in from the steps and shutting the door; "but you ought not to be here in the cold."

"You would keep me in cotton-wool, I think," he remonstrates laughingly.

"Has Selden gone?"

"Yes; do come in out of the cold.

"Where's Alice?" she asks, as she sees the drawing-room empty.

"Come here and sit by the fire," he says coaxingly.

He puts her in the great arm-chair he has just quitted, and kneels down on the hearth-rug in front of the blaze himself.

The firelight plays on his handsome worn features as he turns towards her, smiling.

"Tell me your castles now," he says playfully, "and I'll tell you mine."

"Mine!" she answers, laughing.

"I have none."

"Nonsense!" he rejoins.

"Seventeen, and no castle-building! I know better than that.

"I am sure they are not only built, but inhabited."

"By whom?" she asks, reaching down a fire screen from the mantel-piece.

"By Prince Charming, of course.

"Tell me what he is like."

"I have never seen him," she answers.

"Is that true?" he asks meaningly.

"Yes, of course; why not?"

"Is it true?" he asks again, more earnestly than their topic of conversation seems to warrant.

He takes her hand in his and holds the screen away from her face.

"Look at me and say that you have no ideal prince."

Her eyelashes droop suddenly over her crimsoned cheeks.

"Let my hand go," she says pettishly.

"The fire burns my face."

And he lets her hand go and smiles to himself, well-content.

"I have my Princess Charming," he goes on presently, in his light bantering tone; "but I sha'n't allow you a peep at her face.

"What I might have done had you introduced me to your Prince Charming I can't say.

"But now I shall keep her all to myself; and she is 'more fair than words can say.'"

"I congratulate you," says the girl, getting up suddenly and throwing the screen upon the sofa.

"Dear me, it is fearfully hot here!

"I believe I'll go and see what Alice is doing."

Harold picks up his novel and goes back to his easy-chair; while Richard, toiling up the hill in the storm to his evening with the selfish old Squire, has an ache in his brave heart as he thinks about his friend and the curious and disagreeable change in his ward Sophie, and of many other things which seem to weigh down the Doctor's spirits.

CHAPTER VIII.

RICHARD brings home some news from the Hall, which he imparts the next morning at the breakfast-table.

His news is that Evesham Manor, a handsome country place in the neighborhood, has been purchased by a wealthy Baronet and his bride.

Great doings in the way of festivities are to be anticipated, as the Baronet is rich, and the lady young, beautiful, and fashionable.

"We shall not have much to do with all that," Alice remarks.

"Would you like to go to a ball, Sophie?" asks Harold.

"No; I am sure I should feel like a fish out of water."

"Queer child!" answers Harold, in a tone that sends the hot blood to Doctor Selden's face.

"Why should you dislike it?"

"Because, if strange men asked me to dance, I should die of fright as to what I was to say; and I'd die of rage if they didn't ask me."

"No fear of the latter in any case!" replies Harold, with a laugh.

"But, Dick, you have left out an important item," his sister says.

"What is the Baronet's name?"

Richard does not answer immediately.

He is looking keenly at Sophie's downcast flushing face as she hands Harold his cup.

"By-the-way, that's odd; it didn't strike me before.

"Beauchamp—Sir something or other Beauchamp."

"Any relative of yours?" Miss Selden queries, turning to her guest.

Harold raises his shoulders and smiles grimly.

"I have the honor of being related to Sir George Beauchamp," he says languidly.

"He is my father's eldest brother.

"Unhappily, circumstances over which I had no control have caused a breach between me and my amiable relative."

Richard wonders whether it was the fault of the uncle or the nephew.

"I always had an idea that I was to come in for his money and title.

"He had a dismal kind of place up in Yorkshire.

"I suppose his young bride did not fancy it much.

"By-the-way, what a charming idea to have a young aunt! Is she pretty, Selden?"

"My information does not extend so far, unhappily," the Doctor answers.

"Will you go and call upon your uncle, Mr. Beauchamp?" asks Sophie.

"I suppose I must go and pay my respects to my dear uncle and aunt," he responds, raising his eyebrows in token of how the idea bores him.

"Perhaps before they come, I shall have flitted," he adds lightly.

"When are they expected?

"Do you know, Richard?"

"Some day next week, Gabriel says."

"Must you go out to-day, Richard?" asks his sister.

"Yes.

"I must go to town on business."

"To town!

"On such a day!

"Can't the business wait?"

"No, my dear.

"It is more pressing than time or tide. I only hope the line won't be snowed up.

"I don't remember such snow for years. Sophie, do you know you look pale?

"You have been so many days shut up in the house, I suppose."

"What an amiable guardian!" says Harold jestingly, as Selden leaves the room with his sister.

"It must be nice to have a doctor for a guardian.

"He looks after his ward bodily as well as mentally."

"It is nice," answers the girl a little doggedly.

She crosses the room and stands at the window, discontentedly surveying the great flakes as they fall silently, making a great heap of sparkling whiteness on the window-ledge.

He comes over and stands beside her.

"What is the matter with you this morning?" he asks.

"I am cross," she announces candidly. "You had better be warned, and go away and not talk to me."

"But if I would rather talk to you when you are cross than to another person in an angelic mood, what then?" he urges.

"You have a peculiar taste, that's all," she replies.

"I do not know which way I like you best," he goes on musingly.

"I don't believe any man could say in which humor you are most fascinating. You are never the same ten minutes at a time.

"Each change is more delightful than the last."

"Dear me!" she says mockingly.

"But the cheeks her dark lashes are drooping on her vivid crimson.

"If that is so, to what a pinnacle of perfection I must soon come.

"I shall soon flap my wings and be off to another sphere more worthy of me."

"No," he answers, in the same low tone, "there is no fear of that.

"The wings do not show in the very least, and I am glad of that; for, did you fly, I could not follow you."

"No, I never imagined you could," she says seriously.

Then, with a light laugh—

"But what a pair of geese we are, paying each other such elaborate and long-winded compliments!

"So early in the day too, before the getting up crossness has gone off!"

"I was paying no compliment," Harold begins, in an offended tone.

"Do you want that drawing-paper you were speaking about the other day, Sophie?" Richard asks from the doorway.

"No, thank you—yes, I mean, if it will not be too much trouble," answers the girl confusedly.

She mutters something about a pattern, and leaves the room, averting her flushed face from Richard's too keen eyes.

Richard sees however, and looks narrowly at Harold.

Harold leans against the window in a weary attitude, his hands in his pockets, watching the birds fighting outside over the provision of crumbs that Sophie casts forth to them every morning.

Nothing could be more easy-going or innocent than his appearance.

Richard feels ashamed of his suspicion; and yet why were Sophie's cheeks so red? She does not come back to tell him what description of paper she wants, and repeated shoutings from the stair-foot produce no effect.

He is obliged to go off hurriedly without seeing her again.

"I wonder where Sophie is?" says Alice uneasily, in the afternoon, as she and Harold sit in the waning light before the drawing-room fire.

"That is the proposition that is offered for solution oftener than any other in this house," he answers lazily, balancing his spoon on the edge of his tea-cup.

"Yes; the child is such a fire-fly.

"She is never still.

"I suppose it is her French nature."

"French!" ejaculates Mr. Beauchamp, just catching his spoon midway between his cup and the hearth-rug.

"Is she French?"

Alice tells him Sophie's little story; and he listens with great politeness, but apparently not much interest.

"And what will Selden do with her?" he asks carelessly.

"How do you mean?" demands Miss Selden.

"Well, I mean this.

"He can't keep such a beautiful young woman on his hands.

"And you will be going to your own home soon—then what will happen?"

"She will come to me until she has a home of her own."

"That will not be a very long time off, I imagine," he says, putting his cup down and settling his pillows a little more comfortably.

"She will have many admirers."

"Hardly; in this place there is not one person whose admiration——

"I mean," she goes on, laughing, "to speak like a match-making mamma, there is not not one eligible."

"Perhaps Selden admires her himself, and that is why he keeps her shut up here?" he suggests languidly.

Alice is struck with astonishment at this daring idea.

She forgets to be angry at the imputation of Richard shutting Sophie up.

"I don't think such an idea ever entered his head!" she exclaims.

"She has always been our child, and pet, and plaything; and I am sure Richard regards her as a child still."

Meanwhile Sophie, muffled in furs and wraps, is walking up and down the little platform of the small railway-station.

Up and down marches, regardless of the station-master's bland remarks about a fire in the waiting-room.

She has come to the station with a great determination in her heart to meet Richard to give him pleasure, for she found out by his beaming face last night, when she went into the hall to help him with his coat, that she can give him pleasure.

"And I will," she muses, pacing to and fro.

"Long as she leaves him to me, I shall be as good as I can to him.

"I shall be what I was before he went to Germany.

"How I hate myself for being so cross and nasty and snappish with him!

"How pleased he will be to see me waiting for him!

"First of all, he will scold me well for coming out in the cold, then he will examine my boots to see if they are weather-proof.

"Then he will tuck my hand under his arm, and we shall go off together as merry as grigs!

"And I'll ask him to forgive me for being so horrid!

"And it will be all like what it was before.

"Dear me, how long this train is coming!"

Little she thinks, as she steps into the ticket-office to see the hour, that things will never be as they were before between her and Richard.

She meets the station-master coming out, in deep consultation with the solitary porter.

"I am thinking the line must be blocked, miss," he says, as he passes her.

"Ten minutes over-due."

Her face suddenly turns pale.

"Don't be uneasy, miss, about your brother," the man adds, for he saw Doctor Selden go to town in the morning, and guesses she has come to meet him.

"The line being blocked is no great danger—no danger at all, in fact—only a delay."

"Do you really there has been no accident?" she asks faintly.

"Bless you, miss, no!

"I dare say it is that she's coming along at half speed, owing to the snow.

"As to a accident, it ain't likely.

"If I might be so bold to hadvise, miss, I'd hadvise your going home.

"The night will fall soon, and the snow's heavier every minute."

After another quarter of an hour, fifteen minutes that seem like hours, she takes his advice and goes away.

She is trembling so that she can scarcely walk.

The last thing she sees as she leaves the station is the melancholy porter propped against a lamp-post, waiting for the train that does not come.

What horrors she conjures up for her mental delectation on the way home!

Vivid remembrances of all the most dreadful railway-accidents she has ever read or heard of troop by in a ghostly phantasmagoria.

"Heaven, am I mad?" she says, as, in her blind pain and terror, she strikes heavily against a pine-branch laden with snow, that stretches across the avenue.

The cold snow falling upon her face recalls her to herself.

She has worked herself up to a pretty state of mind by the time she reaches the house, and it is with a sort of desperate courage that opens the drawing-room door and goes in.

A quaint figure she looks, in her long fur-trimmed jacket, dotted over with great snow-flakes, her hair blown wildly about her face, one cheek crimson from the effects of the blow she has given herself, the other deathly white, her eyelashes and the little curls clustering around her face powdered with snow, her eyes wild and startled.

The room is full of people.

A tall gentleman with dark eyes and white hair, a young fashionably-dressed lady in an arm-chair by the fire, a boy who rushes eagerly to meet her, Alice, looking very pale, Harold somewhere indistinctly in the background.

And lying on the sofa, ghastly pale, with closed eyes, Gabriel Allington, and Richard Selden bending anxiously over her.

He is there, alive and unhurt.

He alone does not notice her standing there, with the horror of her fear for him frozen in her eyes.

She makes a step or two forward.

The room swims, the revulsion of feeling has been too much for her.

She feels herself falling, and then, with a whimsical thought flashing across her mind that the great desire of her life is about to be accomplish, and that she is going to faint, she stumbles, feels some one catch her, and then utterly loses consciousness.

CHAPTER IX.

WHEN she recovers, she is in Harold Beauchamp's arms, and the handsome dark eyes are looking at her with an expression that brings the warm blood mantling to her cheeks, and makes her turn away and hide her eyes, even though it is against his coat-sleeve that her face rests.

The strange young lady who was sitting in the arm-chair by the fire has also drawn near, and is gazing at her with an air of kindly interest.

"What a beautiful little creature!" she whispers to Harold.

Sophie hears.

And suddenly she sits up straight.

"What have I done?" she asks, with a curious unnatural little laugh.

"Have I been so silly as to faint?

"What an idea!

"I am quite proud of my feat.

"It has been my ambition these many years to faint.

"Did I do it gracefully, Mr. Beauchamp."

"No, not at all gracefully," he returns lightly.

"You fell forward.

"I thought you had tripped up over a footstool, or something of that sort, and put forth my hand to catch you, when, behold, there you remained, hanging like a shawl upon my arm!

"You have me to thank that your nose is not injured."

"But what is the matter with Gabriel Allington?" asks Sophie, getting up and going to her.

"And who are all these strange people? And, Reggy, where did you drop from?"

"There now—you are all right again?" says Richard's cheery tones as he stoops over Gabriel.

"They have sent for the carriage.

"There are no bones broken."

"Do some one please tell me what's the matter," says Sophie.

"Alice, what has happened?

"Tell me quickly."

Richard has walked away to the fireside, and stands there speaking with the elderly gentleman, who wears a decidedly bored, not to say cross, expression of countenance.

Harold is conversing with the strange lady, and she is laughing and glancing up at him, as if they were friends of long standing.

Alice sits by Gabriel, with her hand clasped close in hers, and Reginald hovers about, divided between rapture at seeing Sophie again and anxiety for his sister.

"Will no one tell me?" demands Sophie impatiently, as Alice bathes Gabriel's forehead with cold water, gently whispering to her the while.

"Reggy, speak up; I don't like mystery plays."

"Well, there's been a general smash," he explains lucidly, "and we're all here."

"The latter part of your information I already possess, having eyes," she retorts scornfully.

"Richard, do tell me what is the matter."

"The matter is," interrupts the old gentleman, "that we have had a breakdown on the railroad, and this gentleman—your brother?—has been acting the good Samaritan to us.

"For my part I am quite ashamed of this unwarrantable intrusion.

"However, we have sent to Eversham station for the carriage that was to have met us there to come on here."

"I saw it as I was coming home," exclaims the girl, "and I was wondering to whom it belonged.

"Then you are Sir George Beauchamp?"

"At your service," he replies, with a courteous bow.

"Richard," says Sophie angrily, turning to him sharply, "do you know I fainted, and you never once came near me?"

"It was not for long," he answers briefly, "and Beauchamp knew what to do for you.

"I had my hands full."

He is looking into the fire, or he would be edified by the flash that comes into those blue eyes.

Sir George sees it however, and smiles. He likes girls of spirit.

"You don't like to be number two," he says, not knowing in the least how his words strike home; "and quite right too."

"No one ever did like it that I ever heard of," she returns merrily.

"But I am quite ashamed of my performance.

"The reason was I struck my head against a tree, and gave it such a hard knock, I declare it aches still, and then the heat of this room—after the cold outside."

Richard still stares at the fire.

The touching account of her woes does not seem to reach his ears.

"Who told you to hit yourself against the tree, silly little one?" whispers Harold's soft voice over her shoulder.

Ah, he hears and he cares!

It is well there is some one to care.

"Won't any one tell me about the accident?" she demands again.

"I don't know much more than you," answers Harold.

"But what little I know is at your service.

"Behold Miss Selden and I sitting here inoffensively Miss Selden knitting, and I reading aloud, and inwardly wondering if you had eloped with any one, when suddenly we hear a terrible noise in the long hall.

"Apparently hundreds of people arriving, and all talking at one minute.

"The door opens: in comes a gentleman well wrapped up, and covered with snow, a lady leaning on his arm.

"This gentleman turns out to be my uncle, Sir George Beauchamp"—with a bow, which the old man returns stiffly enough—"the lady to be his bride.

"Next comes in our friend Richard, also powdered with snow, and hatless, carrying Miss Allington in his arms."

"Well?" says Sophie sharply.

"Well!" he repeats after her.

"Not at all well, I should say.

"These poor benighted—I mean be-snowed—travelers had been all turned out of their train, which had come to a standstill in a snowdrift, and had to pick their way across the fields here.

"Happily no one was hurt, and Miss Selden and I received them with the utmost cordiality and administered to their needs."

"And then you came pitching head-foremost into the room," supplements Reginald.

"Miss Allington's carriage!" is announced at this moment.

"Thank you, so much," Gabriel says, as she holds out her slim white hand to Richard.

"You have been so very good, I cannot thank you."

"I am glad you can't," he returns kindly, "as there is really no need.

"Let me help you to your carriage," he adds, offering her his arm.

"My dear," says Sir George crossly, looking fiercely at his watch, as if it were the cause of their disasters, "do you think that carriage will ever come?"

"Well, I rather hope so," answers his wife carelessly.

"I have no particular wish to walk home," she goes on, "and I think we ought to relieve Doctor Selden and his sister of our society as soon as possible."

"Oh, no, not at all!" says Sophie warmly, acting as hostess in the absence of Alice and Richard.

"We shall be very glad if you will stay.

"But don't be anxious, Sir George; the carriage will soon come.

"It is not easy to get along this weather, the roads are so thick with snow."

"What a delicious little creature you are!" cries Lady Beauchamp gushingly.

"I am going to love you!" she adds, with ecstatic joy, in spite of a warning glance from her steady-looking husband.

Lady Beauchamp is a five-weeks' bride, but her husband's warning glances have so little effect on her that he might as well keep them to himself.

Sir George breaks in abruptly on his wife's raptures.

Harold whispers to Sophie, under pretence of taking her hat from her—

"How touching it is to see Selden with his patients!

"I see now why I never got on in my profession.

"I was not attentive enough."

"Besides a few other minor drawbacks," she answers shortly, "such as being idle and wild."

Harold flushes darkly.

Sir George has heard the last remark.

He evidently quite agrees with it, to judge of his expression as his eyes rest upon his handsome nephew.

Richard comes back with the news that Sir George's carriage has come.

"But can we not persuade you to rest a little longer?" asks Alice pleasantly of Lady Beauchamp.

"No, thank you.

"Sir George has had a long journey today, and I think he is tired," his wife says, with a gay insinuation that her young frame is not tired, whatever his may be.

"I suppose we shall see you at Evershain?" remarks Sir George, not too cordially, to his nephew as they prepare to depart.

"If my aunt will receive me," answers Harold.

Lady Beauchamp laughs, and colors a little.

"The idea of finding a great grown man like you for a nephew is too awful!" she remonstrates.

"I feel suddenly to have become a thousand years old."

"Dear me!

"At that venerable age you must require support.

"Pray take my arm," says Harold readily, just as Richard is about to offer his.

And, as he leads her to her carriage, he bends over her, laughing and whispering, and the relationship seems to have commenced very pleasantly.

"You have not honored me with an invitation to Evershain, Lady Beauchamp," he murmurs, as he stands bareheaded at the carriage-door.

"Oh, I shall expect you to be the first to pay a visit of welcome to me—and Sir George!" she adds, as an after-thought.

"Home," says her husband, gruffly as an ogre.

He may be savage to his paid servants at least.

Harold presses her ladyship's little hand, and she drives off with her gloomy morose

old husband, thinking what an acquisition this new-found kinsman will be at Eversham, also that pretty little Miss Selden.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Sowing and Reaping.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE COST OF HER PROMISE;" "A GIRL'S MISTAKE;" "NOT FAIR FOR ME." ETC.

CHAPTER III.—[CONTINUED.]

DID they disappoint expectation when they came?"

"Oh, no; they rather surpassed it, to judge from the first letters we received!

"Martin O'Hara was the ideal Irishman of the handsome type—blue-eyed, straight-featured, and dark-haired, frank, generous, and mirthful, frolicsome as a schoolboy, and——"

"But, aunt Pat," I interrupted, "is this your 'Horror,' your man of mystery, and village scarecrow?

"I don't recognize the type at all."

"Wait child.

"I am describing Martin O'Hara as he was described to me, as I knew his father years ago.

"When I saw him, he was the worn prematurely old man you saw last night."

"It must have been a great sorrow that changed him so," I said dubiously.

"And then I started, for aunt Pat said, almost in a whisper—

"Or a great crime; but Heaven forbid that I should judge him, Rita.

"Whatever the mystery in his life may be, it has made him the most wretched of men."

She stared dreamily at the fire, and had so little apparent intention of resuming her story that I jogged her memory with a question.

"Was Mrs. O'Hara as popular as her husband?"

"Well, 'yes,' and 'no.'

"The women and girls who wrote to me were naturally a little jealous of her surpassing beauty.

"But, though my correspondents hinted that Mrs. O'Hara was 'slightly theatrical,' and more than suggested that Martin had 'married beneath him,' they had no real harm to say of her, and no deeper feeling of ill-will than disappointed spinsters would naturally entertain for the lucky outsider who had carried off the most eligible prize in the neighborhood.

"On the other hand, Mrs. O'Hara was universally admitted to be a perfect hostess. Never in the memory of the oldest inhabitant had the Court been so gay.

"It was early spring when its master and mistress took possession.

"Through all the summer that followed fete succeeded fete and pleasure reigned supreme.

"Never did there seem to be a happier, more brilliant, more united pair than Martin O'Hara and his wife.

"Scarcely a woman in Wychfield but envied the lady of the manor, and all the men were jealous of its lord.

"They had been about six months at Wychfield when there came into the young wife's head the idea that she would give a fancy-ball.

"To wish with her was to have, to think was to do.

"The ball was at once decided on and given.

"Its memory lives still in the annals of Wychfield, not only kept alive by the startling events that followed it, but by the dazzling light of its own sumptuous splendor.

"There were many gay dresses and fair faces and stalwart forms, much glitter of jewels and lovely gleaming eyes beneath the Wychfield lamps that night; but no rivals could be found to the master and mistress of the house, who shone like bright particular stars among the thousand lesser lights surrounding them.

"They had gone to the same play for their characters, but had not chosen lovers' parts.

"She, in her long trailing robe of snowy satin, with the white gleam of costly pearls on her fair throat and arms, was an ideal Juliet.

"And he, in his rich and artistic dress and with his striking manly beauty, was such a 'Mercutio' as the ball-room at least seldom sees.

"They were both actors by temperament, and, not content with assuming a dress and labelling themselves with a name, they threw themselves into their parts and acted them thoroughly.

"A little too thoroughly, thought some of the lookers-on, noticing how entirely Juliet devoted herself to the slight slip of a boy who, in a tarnished dress of blue and silver and large mantle, made but a shabby and indifferent lover to this dazzling lady of Verona.

"She did not seem to think so, however, for, wherever she went this sorry Romeo went with her.

"The rooms were so crowded that, even dispensing with masks, it would have been impossible that everybody should know everybody else.

"Mr. O'Hara himself, being questioned, only laughed and shook his head.

"I have not the slightest idea, my dear fellow.

"Blanche knows him evidently, and we all unmask at supper.

"Your curiosity can gratify itself then, he answered one curious observer.

"The words seemed frank enough, though the questioner—it was old Doctor Hartopp, Rita, who himself told me the story—afterwards held them to have been instinct with diabolical craft.

"The handsome face was quite unclouded by the jealousy the doctor had expected to see.

"Martin O'Hara was apparently quite content that his wife should amuse herself.

"As he turned from his unsuspicious host, with a cynical shrug of the shoulders, there came to Doctor Hartopp's mind some happy memory of the words embodying Othello's noble faith, 'Tis not to make me jealous to say my wife is fair, feeds well, loves company.

"Where virtue is, these are more virtuous.

"And then he called to mind how fast that chivalric trust had faded, burned up in the consuming fires of jealousy.

"However there was no one here to play Iago's part; so he let the subject drop, and, amusing himself in his own fashion, half forgot it, until, taking his place at the great horse-shoe supper-table, he looked curiously round it and up and down all the other tables in search of a Romeo's face, but no Romeo was there.

"Another cavalier, in shining silk and all aglow with starry jewels, occupied the place of honor by Mrs. O'Hara's side; the Doctor recognized the good-tempered vacuous face of a county notability, and knew that social etiquette had placed him there. But no law of society, written or unwritten had caused the slippery ball-room floor to open and swallow up the slim boy in shabby blue and tarnished silver whose very incongruity with his brilliant surroundings had made him one of the topics of the night.

"Yet in what other fashion had he vanished?

"The Doctor was not alone in his marvel and conjecture; but Romeo was never again seen until——"

Aunt Patience paused so abruptly, that I, listening with absorbed interest, caught my breath.

"Oh, go on, aunt Patience! You must tell me the end now."

Aunt Pat shook her head drearily.

"The end has not yet come; but all that is known you shall hear.

"Apart from the comparatively modern and inhabited portion of the Court, but communicating with it by an old disused gallery, there stands, as I dare say you know, Rita, the one tall gray ivy-grown tower that alone remains of the old Roman keep of which the Wychfields were so proud."

"I have, I think, a vague recollection of a very ruinous tower, with very thick walls and holes that you could thrust your body through.

"What has this to do with the Romeo?" I questioned.

"Much; for at the foot of that tower an under-gardener, passing to his work early the next morning, found the lost Romeo, lying face downward among the ferns and ivy and sharp stones, horribly mangled, and stone dead."

"Oh, aunt Patience, how horrible!" I said, shuddering, and closing my eyes, as though by so doing I could shut out the vivid picture her words had conjured up. "But I suppose it is of this that you suspect him.

"What was there to connect Mr. O'Hara with the death of this wretched boy?"

"Martin O'Hara was found senseless on the floor of the ruined room in the tower, from the window of which the unhappy intruder had fallen, or been thrown."

"Was it never decided which?

"Was there no inquiry held?" I asked, in a low tone, oppressed by the utter horror of the tale, and still unreasonably indisposed to believe in Martin O'Hara's guilt.

"Yes, there was an inquest, at which Martin however did not appear; his swoon had changed to raging fever, with which the local doctors declined to deal, and of his recovery from which the famous London magnates professed themselves by no means hopeful—if 'hopeful' were indeed the word, for those who liked him best saw in death the only solution of his trouble. Meanwhile, while he lay unconscious, the inquest was held and a merciful verdict of 'death by misadventure' given."

"But was nothing found out about the boy," I asked eagerly—"what he wanted, why he came there, and why any one should wish his death?

"Was he Mrs. O'Hara's lover?"

"My dear, if they had proved him that," said aunt Patience, with a sigh, "nothing would have saved Martin from the felon's neck.

"When they lifted the poor mangled body, the tarnished blue and silver all torn and blood-stained now, they made a strange and wonderful discovery.

"When they removed the golden wig, they found long plaits of dark brown hair beneath.

"The lost Romeo was a woman."

"Well!" I cried, at a loss for any more dignified expression of the amazement that filled me.

"The wildest of romances could not equal this, aunt Pat.

"And pray what did Mrs. O'Hara do?

"She was the presumable cause of the mischief."

"Nothing.

"Poor soul, she could not."

"Could not?

"What do you mean?

"Was she dead too?"

The tears in aunt Pat's kind eyes rebuked my impatience, as she looked at me and said, with a sort of hushed solemnity—

"Heaven knows, my dear; from that night to this she has never been seen."

A dead silence followed this startling sentence, a silence in which I stared thoughtfully into the red fire, trying to reconcile my common sense to the tale of nightmare horrors.

And aunt Pat—well, I don't quite know what aunt was doing.

Praying perhaps for the lost sinner, the miserable, desperate man.

"And did the matter rest there?" I asked softly at last.

"Officially, yes; I think a point was strained in favor of a neighbor and general favorite, and at first there was no strong belief in Martin O'Hara's guilt.

"It was thought possible that, having some cause for jealousy, he had thrown this suspicious-looking stripling from the tower window in a fit of ungovernable rage.

"On the other hand it was more than possible that, having taken refuge in this crazy hiding-place, the girl, groping in the dark, had fallen through one of the unguarded windows, and so come naturally though terribly by her death."

"Afterwards, when other and darker circumstances came to light, there remained only social ostracism, as a punishment for the suspected man.

"When he recovered did he give me no explanation of his presence in the tower—make no search for his lost wife?"

"When he recovered his senses, which was not for many months after the catastrophe—some people say they have not come back to him yet—he was what he has been ever since, a moody, sullen and abstracted man, with the snow of winter on his head and a fierce light in his great sad eyes.

"I think the villagers saw a convincing proof of his guilt in the sudden whitening of his hair."

"Oh, aunt Pat, how unjust!" I cried indignantly; but aunt Pat only shook her head.

"Our judgment of our fellows is rarely just, Rita, even when we let something higher than superstitious credulity guide us.

"Martin O'Hara can hardly complain that others wrong him, when he refuses to say one word to justify himself—refuses to make any search for the wife he professed to love."

"But search has been made surely?"

"It has been by every one but him.

"The Manor even has been thoroughly examined, and the great lake drained.

"Martin is, I believe, under police surveillance still; but all efforts to discover her have been fruitless.

"From that day to this, Blanche O'Hara has neither been heard of nor seen."

The subject was far from exhausted; there were a hundred questions I still burned to ask, a hundred details aunt Pat could still supply.

But just then a ring at the great hall-door announced an arrival, and almost before I could change my hearth-rug lounge for a more sedate and dignified attitude, old Stephens had ushered in a visitor.

It was nobody of much importance, only little Miss Trinder, Mrs. Joliffe's meek and useful unmarried sister.

As she had dropped in to lunch, and afterwards proposed walking down to the church with us, she effectually spoiled our tete-a-tete.

I listened with burning cheeks, and I fear but ill-disguised impatience to the mildly polite platitudes in which the two kindly old ladies indulged through the simple meal, and the short walk along the ringing, frost-bound road that led to the pretty gray-stone village church.

Our arrival at the ivy-grown porch cut my cynical reflections short, and, as the two Joliffe girls came forward at once to take possession of me, I had no more leisure for thought.

The church looked very warm and bright, coming into it as we did from the chill gray skies and gathering mists of the December afternoon.

"It looks nice, does it not?" said Minna Joliffe, surveying the nearly finished work with an air of modest satisfaction.

I assented, and then bent down to examine the exotics curiously.

"How very beautiful they are!" I said, touching the waxen petals.

"Who sends these, Miss Joliffe?"

Minna turned her bright eyes over her furry shoulder in an apprehensive glance, and lowered her voice cautiously, as she said—

"The Horror!"

I looked at them with renewed interest, at her with quick curiosity.

"Mr. O'Hara!

"Why I thought——"

Miss Joliffe gave my arm a very nervous squeeze.

"Don't talk so loudly.

"You thought he was generally out, so he is.

"But papa says that he has no right to treat him differently from his other parishioners, or exclude him from the common charities of the place.

"So he alone of all the people here still calls at the Court, and, though Mr. O'Hara rarely sees him, he shows his gratitude by stripping his hothouses for our decorations, and sending papa every Christmas a large cheque for the poor."

"I cannot believe him to be a bad man," I said, hardly conscious that I spoke aloud.

"Minna Joliffe opened her round bird-like eyes in amazement.

"My dear Miss Tempest," she chirped in her best semi-clerical manner, "it is not for us to judge, but to me it seems hardly possible that a murderer can be a good man!"

I felt fiercely indignant that this chit of a girl should thus dictatorially take for granted a point which the law of her country had not ventured to decide, but I said no more.

Presently onlookers and workers took leave together, the lights were extinguished the church locked up, and we trooped merrily on through the chill darkness of the fast-falling night, to tea and music in the Rectory parlor.

"You must come with us," said Minna entreatingly.

"I want you to try your chants for Christmas."

She looked at me so eagerly that I could not refuse.

I told her however that the decision rested with my aunts, not with me.

"Oh, they are all right!" she cried joyously.

"I was afraid you might be tired; they always like a chat with papa, and to-night, too, they will see their favorite, Paul."

And then I wished it had been possible to draw back, for, unlike my aunts, I was by no means anxious to meet Paul Joliffe.

CHAPTER IV.

"I DID not know you had met Paul Joliffe since you were quite a little girl, Rita," said aunt Priscilla, turning to me with a cup of coffee, as we sat discussing our neighbors at the breakfast-table the next morning.

"Oh, yes!" I answered, as indifferently as I could, though I felt my naturally bright color grow brighter still.

"He came pretty frequently at one time; papa liked him very much and thought he would do great things at the Bar, but we have not seen him lately."

"I wonder why?" said aunt Priscilla, gazing at me with such evident suspicion, that I shrugged my shoulders and turned away.

"He is a very nice young fellow, Rita, a good son and a good boy and a good brother one who, when his time comes, will surely prove a good husband."

The small gray eyes, sheltered by beetling brows, were sharp as they were kindly in their scrutiny, but I do not think they read any confusion in my face now.

Paul Joliffe might make the best husband in the world, as aunt Priscilla said. Privately I thought he would, but he would never be mine.

Once indeed he was my lover, and my idol—once, not so long ago, tall, blue-eyed, handsome Paul was the hero of my dreams by night and fairy visions by day: but that time had passed now, the pleasant dream and cruel wakening were alike over and done with, and I thought yesterday, I knew last night when I touched the strong hand without a tremor, and met the blue eyes without a blush, that the old foolish love was dead and buried.

If Clare Merodith had not done me a double wrong, and stolen my father as well as my lover, I think I could have forgiven her, as I realized with a thankful thrill how lightly I could let Paul Joliffe go.

But Paul, young, handsome, and fascinating as he was, had not a tithe of Sir Hercules Tempest's wealth, and so, though she condescended to turn his head, and make him faithless to Sir Hercules' daughter, he was sent quickly to the wall when the celebrated physician sought her for his wife.

Of course my father knew nothing of this interlude in the drama.

When Paul and I first spoke of our love, we agreed to keep it secret until he should have made some progress in his profession; and so, when he proved fickle, and bowed down before the fair enchantress who played the part of evil genius in my life, I had only the quiet pain of wronged affection, and not the burning shame of an obvious jilting to bear—for which I was most exceedingly grateful.

I think Clare guessed both my pain and his treachery.

She so persecuted me with lamentations over "the insane folly of that young Joliffe who without a penny to call his own actually wanted me to be his wife, the handsome, foolish boy."

"He is a boy to you," I said spitefully. "But I have heard that a boy's first passion is generally for some one much older than himself."

The childish rudeness of the retort only seemed to amuse her.

She lifted her little white hands with a gracefully affected gesture, and broke into a pretty ringing laugh.

"Do I look so old, Rita?

"Dear Sir Hercules always calls me a child, and in this happy home I feel like one—but that is beside the question.

"I may be handsome Paul's grande passion; indeed"—with a coquettish downdrop of the pretty head—"I think I am, but I do not think I am his first love.

"What do you say, Rita?"

I said nothing, though I winced under the cruel words, and, as was my wont when I was weak enough to engage in any war of words with my future step-mother, I retired worsted from the fight.

All this passed through my mind as I sat slicing my roll and sipping my coffee, and listening with half-hearted attention to my aunt's discourse.

I felt sorry for myself in a disinterested way, as for a stranger I had seen used badly; but my heart was by no means broken; and there was an inner current of gladness in my newly-assured conviction of this.

"How bright you look, child!" said aunt Pat, with a well-pleased smile.

"I think last night's dissipation did you good, though you and Minna did devote yourselves to the piano, and turn your backs ostentatiously on the rest of the company."

"I like Minna, and I like music; but, aunt Pat," I added, with an audacious de-

termination to show that I did not shrink from the utterance of my lost love's name, "do not talk of devotion to anything or any one, after your shameless flirtation with Paul Jolliffe!"

The pretty old lady smiled, as pretty old ladies do smile at such accusations.

"Paul was always a favorite of mine, my dear; but last night we were talking of Miss Meredith."

It was hard, in spite of my calmness and determination, to bear this without a wince.

I looked out at the deep, red-curtained window to the snowy bank and icicle-hung trees, as I said calmly—

"Well, what does ye say of her?"

"Much what you say, Rita, though of course with more reserve—praises her beauty highly; but I do not think he admires her, there was so much embarrassment in his tone."

I rose from the table, and I felt, with angry scorn for my own weakness, that there was a betraying bitterness in my laugh.

"You are quite mistaken, aunt Pat; he was Miss Meredith's devoted slave when he first made her acquaintance; but she has so many slaves, and they cannot all be in favor together.

"Well, what shall we do to-day?"

I put the question only to escape from the disagreeable discussion into which we had drifted; but aunt Pat took it very seriously, and came over to her arm-chair in the ingle nook with an anxious look.

"You will do many things, Rita, in and out of the house, I hope; run down to the church again, skate, and sing with the Jolliffe girls; see to our decorations here; show me the last London fashion in old ladies' caps—we are terribly behind the age in Wychfield, you know—and generally prove yourself the busy bee you always were.

"But first——"

"But first?" I repeated questioningly, as aunt Pat paused.

"First you must have a little serious talk with me.

"To-morrow will be Christmas Eve."

"Well," I cried, with uneasy defiance, "you are not going to poach on Doctor Jolliffe's manor, aunt Pat, and preach a sermon, are you?"

"Has there ever been a Christmas Eve before this, Rita darling, in which you have not been by your dear father's side; has he not always marked this season of all others by some little surprise, proof of his love, some costly present, some plan for your pleasure?"

"Oh, don't aunt Pat!"

"I turned away with a sharp cry of pain, for she probed my deep wound mercilessly.

"As though I did not feel the change, as though the season had no memories, and no bitterness for me!

"I must, my child—Rita, come here to me!"

"The sharply old hands drew me down upon the footstool, until my eyes were on a level with the kind old face, in which I read a compassion that was too true to spare me one reproving word.

"Since I placed you a little dark-haired baby in your father's arms and bade him welcome a little daughter in place of the son he hoped for, has Sir Hercules ever been unkind or forgetful of you, Rita?"

I shook my head half fiercely, and I gazed at the leaping firelight through a mist of hot tears.

"Since that day later on, a day within your dim remembrance, Rita, when I led the pale, scared child, as the best consoler, to the stricken man's side, and told him she was motherless, has he not been father and mother both in one to you?"

"Oh, yes—yes," with a sobbing, choking utterance, "he has been the best, the dearest always!

"But now——"

"There is no 'but' strong enough to make you forsake him."

"Ah, but there is!" I said, with sorrowful pride.

"There is the greatest 'but' of all, aunt Pat—he no longer wants me.

"I am nothing to him now."

"So say selfishness and pride and folly," said aunt Patience.

"Do I seem harsh, Rita?

"My heart aches for you, dearest child, but it aches for your father too.

"This marriage is quite certain to take place?"

"Quite; there is no hope of escaping it."

"Then, as you must submit to the inevitable, submit at once, like the dear child you are, if this marriage will make your father happy, even at your expense."

"It will not," I asseverated with impassioned earnestness; "believe me, it will not!

"She is not good, she does not care for him."

The slim white fingers smoothed my ruffled hair, the clear persuasive voice flowed unalteringly on.

"You are no fair judge, child; but, if it should unfortunately be as you say, then the more reason that you, who are good, who love him well, should stay by your father's side."

I did not answer, unless there was a speech in my fast-falling tears and in the sobs that seemed to tear my very heart.

It was so hard to yield, and yet so harder far to gainsay my aunt's words.

"It may be, dear child, Heaven grant it will be, that your father has many years of honored and happy life before him.

"But he is no longer young, and there may come a Christmas Eve when, though he came to trample on your pride and well-nigh break your heart, you would give that heart's blood to touch his living hand and look upon his living face."

"Oh, don't, don't!" I cried, starting up passionately.

"Say no more, aunt Pat; I cannot bear it.

"What am I to do?"

And indeed I felt as though my heart were bursting with the vain remorse her words foreshadowed.

She rose, too, and drew my proud head down upon her shoulder, and kissed me as my mother would have kissed me, had she seen my bitter grief.

"That is my good brave child!" she said cheerily.

"Write to your dear father, Rita—tell him how sorry you are for your foolish prank, and ask him if he can spare time to run down here and fetch you back, to eat his Christmas dinner in good old family fashion with his little daughter and his two old maiden sisters."

I obeyed aunt Pat without further demur.

Dear aunt Pat!

When, in an evil day for us, she lays down the burden of her gentle life, and crosses the dark river, the best of the beatitudes will be hers on the other side, and He who has blessed the peacemakers will surely greet her with "Well-done!"

I did not find my task so hard as I thought it would be.

The minute my pen touched the paper, words came faster than I could set them down, and I poured out all the love and sorrow of my heart in a passionate flood that washed away all bitterness and sense of wrong.

I did not re-read what I had written—I folded it up, all blotted, tear-stained and incoherent as it was, addressed, and dropped it into the letter-bag, and then I told aunt Pat what I had done.

She kissed me and called me a good girl; but she was her comfortable prosaic self again, and immediately busied herself with directions that the "red room" or best guest chamber, should be made ready for Sir Hercules Tempest's use.

The rest of the day passed slowly enough though I threw myself actively into every scheme for work or amusement suggested by those around me, dreading idleness as the worst of all foes.

I spent my morning in the school-room, helping the Jolliffes and aunt Priscilla to make the whitewashed map-hung walls brilliant with red cloth, green leaves, cotton-wool, and scarlet berries.

It was a merry, happy time, though we covered our clothes with dirt and tore our hands and garments with the spitefully spiky leaves.

Paul Jolliffe was there, handsomer than ever, and after the first stiffness and embarrassment had passed, more devotedly attentive to me.

Of course I should not have set much store by his devotion as I was the only stranger-girl present, but that whenever I met his blue eyes I saw in them the same look of tender pleading that used to thrill me once with a wild joy that only irritated and annoyed me now.

Perhaps I showed my annoyance, for his bright face clouded, and as he placed my wreath for me, which was at an altitude beyond my reach, he muttered with sudden fierceness—

"Rita, do you never mean to forgive me?"

I flushed slightly at the mortifying inference the question conveyed, and answered with indignant frankness—

"Indeed, Mr. Jolliffe, I will not forgive your insulting me with a doubt, otherwise we are very good friends.

"Our little comedy was pleasant enough while it lasted; but we should have been horribly bored if we had tried to play it all our lives."

He bit his lip savagely, and gave me an angry glare that induced in my unromantic mind the practicle reflection that, though an ideal lover while his passion lasted, Paul Jolliffe would make a very ill-tempered husband; and then without a word he turned away, nor did he condescend to assist or accost me for the rest of the day.

I took his defection very light-heartedly.

Hard as my fingers worked over leaves and berries, my thoughts were busier still with my own hopes and fears, and with that vivid, fearful picture aunt Patience had conjured up.

"Surely he will telegraph to say that he will come.

"If not, I must go to him," I thought feverishly, as I sat in my quiet corner working busily, and wondering if the day would ever end.

At five o'clock, our labors being complete, we betook ourselves home.

Archdale Glen and Archdale Rectory were about equidistant from the church and school, consequently we parted at the churchyard gate, and went our several ways, the Jolliffes through the straggling village, aunt Priscilla and I up the hill.

The air was keen, but clear and crisp, and a slender crescent moon shone brightly in the low gray sky.

We had not parted company five minutes when aunt suddenly recalled an important parochial communication she had forgotten to make to Mrs. Jolliffe.

"Dear, dear," she said, coming to a dead stop, and rubbing that ill-used nose of hers, "how very stupid of me! Minna will be quite at fault if she does not know.

"Do you mind going back with me to the Rectory, Rita?"

I had been anticipating the appeal, and tears of disappointment rushed to my eyes.

"Oh, auntie," I said, with coaxing eagerness, "you go to the Rectory and let me run home!

"Oh, yes"—as she shook her head—"suppose papa has telegraphed? It would be so horrid to waste all that time!

"Look how bright it is; and I should be home in ten minutes."

She hesitated a moment, but finally, with many consultations of the clear sky and deserted pathway, gave a reluctant consent, and went down the hill again and on to where the faint lights of the village twinkled cheerily through the night, while I ran lightly up the hill, rejoicing in the victory I had won.

Two fields to cross, a winding lane to pass through, and then I should know my fate, should see whether my father had been as prompt to pardon as I had hoped.

I crossed the first field without adventure, and met no one in the second, though the sound of distant and suggestively drunken melody rather quickened my pulse as I passed through it.

And when the sound began to be accompanied by the lurching of heavy feet and the hiccup-interrupted iteration of the rustic ditty—

"I have a twopence, a jolly, jolly twopence,
I have a twopence, I love it as my life:
A penny I will lend, and a penny I will spend,
And I'll take nothing home to my wife"—

the last immoral determination being jerked out in a perfect roar of triumph, I began to be seriously alarmed; to wish with all my heart that I had controlled my impatience and remained under the safe shelter of aunt Priscilla's wing.

Wishing, however, was vain enough now.

The man was within sight; a heavy-looking, smock-frock-clad creature with a blue-and-white cotton bundle under his arm.

He saw me as I approached the stile, for his face broadened in a beery grin, and he hastened towards me.

"Pay the toll," he cried, with a hateful chuckle and filling up the narrow passage with his great figure and extended arms—"gi us a kiss, pretty madam, and awl help tha over."

I do not think I am a coward; but my heart felt like lead as I looked wildly round and saw no possibility of escape.

If I went forward I should be in the man's arms, if I retreated he would of course pursue me, and I remembered hearing that drunken men, even when they could not walk, were capable of a swift and steady run.

While I wildly weighed possibilities and looked, I suppose, the very picture of dismay, my foe put one great foot over the stile and, launching himself after it, seized me in a brutal bear-like hug.

"You've made me come for my kiss, so awl make it two," he cried, thrusting his dirty bearded face into mine.

Terror and utter loathing made me dumb; I could only struggle madly for a moment, and then——

Then I heard a quick exclamation and a heavy fall, and I stood freed and trembling in the moonlight, with my cowardly foeman in a huddled heap on the pathway, and a tall slender figure at my side.

"You have been terribly frightened, I fear; pray take my arm."

I took it ashamed of my own shaking limbs, but really afraid that without some such support I should fall.

I looked apologetically into my champion's face, and as I looked I recognized it.

For the second time in three days, Martin O'Hara had come to my assistance.

"It was nothing," he said, answering my incoherent thanks.

"I heard the scoundrel's words as I came up the lane and was fortunately in time to punish his insolence.

"I don't think"—with a scornful glance in the direction of the recumbent figure—"that he will trouble you again, but still, with your permission, I will see you home.

"You are going, I think, to Archdale Glen?"

"Yes, I am Margaret Tempest, Miss Archdale's niece, whom you kindly befriended the night before last," I answered, looking gratefully up at the stern face of my protector.

"Mr. O'Hara, why will you not let my aunt thank you for this second service you have done me?"

He did not answer instantly.

I think the intense earnestness of the appeal touched him a little, and the pause was significantly filled by the volley of abuse poured after us by my late assailant.

I did not catch or understand one half the phrases that composed it; but I shuddered at the word with which it closed.

"Murderer!"

Martin O'Hara's face might have been wrought in fine steel for all the emotion it showed; his voice was quite clear and steady as he said—

"Take that for your answer, Miss Tempest; I enter no house save my own, and I speak to no person who does not first address me.

"For in the eyes of all Wychfield, your aunts included, I am—what that man has called me."

I could not deny his words—for had not even dear gentle aunt Pat sorrowfully avowed her belief in his guilt?—but as I looked at the proudly carried head unnaturally whitened, at the good, sorrowful face unnaturally set and stern, I felt a sudden, strong, unshakable conviction that all the Wychfield world was wrong, that Martin O'Hara was as innocent as I of the crime laid to his charge.

And on the impulse of this conviction I spoke.

"But I do not think you that," I said falteringly, yet earnestly.

"I shall never forget your kindness; I shall always claim your acquaintance, whenever and wherever we may meet, and ask you, as I do now, to take my hand."

I held it out as I spoke, for we had reached the iron gates of my home, and it was time to say good-bye.

I half repented my foolish speech and gesture within the next few seconds, for my companion was so strangely slow to respond to my advance.

At last, just as I turned disappointedly away, he seized the long-disregarded hand, and raised it to his lips.

"Heaven bless you, child," he cried passionately, "for that foolish, unreasonable faith!

"It is founded on nothing; but if it lives only this one day, Heaven bless and reward you for it for ever!"

I bowed my head, awed by the fervor of the benediction, and, when I raised it, Martin O'Hara was gone.

I saw the tall, shadowy figure striding along through the chill splendor of the moonlight, and watched it till it vanished from my sight.

Then, with a strange flutter at my heart and a troubled little sigh, I passed into the warmth and comfort of my home.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Scientific and Useful.

WATERPROOFING CLOTH.—Imbue the cloth on the wrong side with a solution of isinglass, alum, and soap, by means of a brush. When dry, brush on the wrong side against the grain. This makes the cloth impervious (for a long time) to water but not air.

SACK-CLOTH.—According to the *Military World*, sack-cloth or canvas can be made as impervious to moisture as leather, by keeping it in a decoction of one pound of oak bark with fourteen pounds of boiling water. This quantity is sufficient for eight yards of stuff. The cloth has to soak twenty-four hours, when it is taken out, passed through running water, and hung up to dry. The flax and hemp fibres, in absorbing the tannin, are at the same time, better fitted to resist wear.

THE GUMS.—The daily precaution (the use of the tooth-brush) for the preservation of the teeth, and the cleanliness of the mouth, will generally ensure a healthy condition of the gums; though they are sometimes affected from constitutional causes, which produce tenderness and liability to bleed upon pressure: cold, also, has a similar effect occasionally. Tincture of myrrh, diluted with a little water, is, in such cases, an excellent purifying and strengthening application. A few drops of tincture of catechu in water forms an astringent and stimulating lotion.

STEEL-IRON.—This new compound material is thus produced: A mould is prepared having a division of thin iron plate dividing it into two compartments. Molten steel is run into one, whilst at exactly the same time the other compartment receives a charge of molten iron. If the temperature and the thickness of the dividing plate have been properly adjusted, the plate forms a welding medium for the two metals, and a mass half iron and half steel is produced. There are many uses for which iron thus faced with steel will be found valuable, armor-plates and rails being among the number. From its ingenuity, this process deserves success, and from its simplicity it is likely to obtain it.

Farm and Garden.

CULTIVATION.—Frequent cultivation is a good substitute for manure, but pays much better with manure than without. This has been tried on garden crops, especially potatoes, cabbage, beans, onions, and other root crops. An old saw has come down to us from the fathers that he who would have early cabbage sprouts must hoe them every morning before breakfast. In the early morning the dew is on, and this is charged with an available amount of ammonia, which of course, feeds the roots below. If the surface is neglected a crust forms and the air does not circulate in the soil.

FOWLS.—It is often desirable to know which is the most profitable way to sell fowls—alive, dressed or both dressed and drawn. To find out weigh the fowls alive, then after it is dressed and again after being drawn. Record the weight in each case, and then a little figuring with weight and market prices as a basis, will soon tell the inquirer what he wants to know. Generally, we think it will be found that selling alive pays about as well as to dress, particularly if the owner's time is valuable and he is not an expert at picking. Those who buy and dress for market on a large scale generally are experts themselves at this worker have such "artists" in their employ.

PLANTS IN POTS.—Care should be taken to see that plants in pots are given good drainage. This is best secured by putting a lot of broken bricks or pieces of broken pots in the bottom of the flower-pot. These pieces should be as large as a hazelnut or even larger. Over these pieces some dried moss, sphagnum or peat should be placed, or even a handful of dried grass, if nothing better can be had. This will prevent the earth from falling among the fragments and will insure complete drainage. It is supposed of course, that the regular flower-pots are used with a hole at the bottom for the escape of the water. If a box or other vessel be used a hole should be made in the bottom. Persons who have never tried the above method will be surprised with the difference it will make in their plants. The earth in the pots should be kept moist but not wet, soggy, or cold.

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

SIXTY-THIRD YEAR.

SATURDAY EVENING, JULY 28, 1883.

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ABSURDITIES.

It may require a great deal of discrimination to distinguish between that which seems absurd to us merely because of our limited knowledge, while to another man, who has a wider vision, it appears to be an established truth.

When the Asiatic monarch was told that in certain countries, at certain seasons of the year, water became solid, and the shower descended in the form of white flakes that could be shoveled off like earth, it is not strange that he should have treated the statement with contempt.

So when it was announced that the earth rolled over every day, it was natural enough that the ignorant multitude should regard it as preposterous, because they could not understand how this could be without everything tumbling off, and they were sure that they could not walk about with their heads hanging downward.

Some things may be very improbable, and yet not so absolutely impossible as to be pronounced absurd. No testimony would ever convince you that a neighbor of yours had seen a Centaur—a horse with a man's head—in the street, but there is not the same reason for doubting the existence of the sea-serpent. If there was only one or two men who had ever seen fish fly in the air, the statement would be ridiculed. Nearly every great discovery and invention of modern times was received at first with incredulity and disdain.

Before we venture to say that this or that is "impossible in the nature of things," we should call to mind how little we know about nature, after all.

We are apt to regard the views of those who differ from us in important matters as in themselves simply absurd, while our opinions are regarded in the same way by our opponents. This is particularly true in the region of theology.

It is a marvel to us how such a man as Mr. A., so well-informed and well-balanced in other matters, so careful in his judgments, so upright and honest, can possibly accept the creed which he professes to believe. How can he be willing to worship after such strange forms, and identify himself with a denomination that is so irrational?

And then, outside the pale of all the churches, stands the agnostic non-believer, and he wonders how rational men can believe in anything except that which their senses teach them.

And then, outside of him, may be seen a still more agnostic circle, who declare that we are not sure of even that which comes to us by our senses—in fact, we are not certain of anything but the fact of uncertainty.

There is no question that the greatest and wisest men are susceptible of extraordinary delusions. The wise and learned Samuel Johnson had his pet superstitions. Isaac Newton was weak on certain points. And in our own day there are distinguished men who would astonish the public if they should reveal all the chimeras that float about their brains. It might be that they were not chimeras, after all, but solid truths, resting upon evidence which it would not be possible to make intelligent to others. So that, after all, there is something favorable to be said even of the absurd.

SANCTUM CHAT.

It seems that machines as well as men work harder here than in Europe. The Railway Gazette says that 100 locomotives here do as much as 131 in Germany, 139 in Switzerland, and 140 in Austria-Hungary.

—

THE Postoffice Department advises that the address on printed matter or merchandise mailed to distant points at home or abroad, be written on the enclosure as well as on the wrapper. Failure to deliver the articles in case the wrapper is lost or destroyed will thereby be avoided.

—

So large a proportion of our girls will become wives and mothers that our only safety lies in giving all of them proper preparation for the life of wives and mothers. For such a life they will need, first of all, good physical health. Yet in no other particular, perhaps, is the education of girls more generally neglected or more frequently misdirected. The aim not only to little systematic effort made to educate girls' bodies into supple robustness, and to give stamina and buoyancy to their constitutions, but there is, too commonly, positive education in ill health given to them.

—

THE Abbe Moigno has formed a company in Paris, and has raised $150,000 for the purpose of dragging the Red Sea and Bitter Lakes, in order to recover the chariots, treasure, arms and other remains of Pharaoh's host, which he believes to lie there covered with a saline deposit. The research will be prosecuted by divers. The expedition is ready to leave Marseilles, and is only detained by the outbreak of cholera at the Red Sea ports.

—

AN exchange, published in Hartford, Conn., contained, a few days ago, a facetious account of a fight between two pastors, in a baptismal font in a church in that city. A special correspondent telegraphed the story to several cities, and the thrilling details of the imaginary encounter are now being dished up by newspapers in all parts of the country, under such headings as "Death Lock in a Font," "Desperate Affray in a Church," etc.

—

EVERY man who produces something—something that the world needs—is a public benefactor. So every man who does something that the world needs to have done is a public benefactor. But any man whose business makes the world any worse than it was before, cannot be such a business man as he ought to be. The first thing, then, is to choose a business that shall make the world better—not worse. Perhaps you may not thus choose the business which will make you rich the quickest, but nevertheless you have chosen as you ought to choose.

—

THE Commissioner of Patents, in a decision just announced, says: "He who uses reasonable dilligence, and first reduces an invention to practice, embodying it in practical form, must be regarded as the first inventor, and entitled to a patent against one who, although prior in time to making it, by negligence allows it to remain unknown. Where inventors withhold their inventions and confer no benefits upon the public, there is no reason why protection should be afforded them if other and more dilligent inventors produce the same thing, and do confer such benefits. The rule is well established, that an applicant cannot have a patent for that which has been patented to another, unless he can make out such a case as would defeat the patent."

—

"IF the various countries maintain their present rate of increase," says the Secretary of the Embassy at Berlin, "fifty years hence the United States will have a population of 100,000,000, Russia approximately 153,000,000, Germany 83,000,000, the United Kingdom 63,000,000, Austria-Hungary and Italy both 44,000,000, France only 40,000,000. Germany has already in round numbers 7,500,000 more inhabitants than France, but in this reckoning Algeria is not taken into account." For war purposes, however, it is observed that the balance is not so heavily against France, for whereas in Germany there are only 965 males to every thousand females, in France there are 991. Germany has, therefore, only three and a half million more than France.

—

IN France the snail is considered more toothsome than the oyster. The best ones are raised in Burgundy, where they grow double the size of the large garden snails of this country. Some of them are fully as large as an ordinary oyster. Snail-raising has become quite a profitable business, and is increasing yearly. They are kept in a damp place and fed on peppermint and such things as they like best, until they seal themselves up in their shells for the winter, when they are ready for market. Nature has furnished snails with extraordinary powers of reproduction, each individual being both male and female, and the outlay in snail-farming is represented only by the time and trouble spent in collecting them and keeping them from straying.

—

FORTY years ago a well-known citizen of Raleigh, then a young merchant, was engaged to be married to a young lady of Wake county. For some cause the young people became estranged, and the marriage was broken off. The gentleman soon after married, another of Wake county's daughters, who lived but a few years. He then took a second wife, with whom he lived happily for a number of years, when she died, and he took a third wife, who died two years ago. A short time since the citizen referred to, now three score and ten, met the object of his first love, whom he had not seen for over forty years. Acquaintance was renewed, love revived, proposals of marriage made and accepted, and within a few days, it is said, the old gentleman will lead to the altar his first love of forty years ago.

—

A FORESTRY BULLETIN of the Census Office reports that the total consumption of wood for fuel in the United States during the year 1880 is estimated at 145 778,137 cords, the value of which was $321,962,373. Of this quantity, 140,537,490 cords were used for domestic purposes; 1,971,818 cords by railroads; 787,862 cords by steamboats; 358,074 cords in mining and amalgamating the precious metals; 266,771 cords in other mining operations; 1,157,522 cords in the manufacture of brick and tile; 540,448 cords in the manufacture of salt; and 158,208 cords in the manufacture of wool. During the same year 74,008,972 bushels of charcoal were burned, the value of which was $5,276,736. An idea of these vast quantities might be got by calculating the sizes of the piles they would make in various shapes.

—

IT is not a pleasant fact that as the world goes, the men to whom women have paid most homage and expressed most adulation are not specimens of the best type of manhood. In the church, as a rule, it is not he who moved by divine compassion goes into the by-ways, into the hovels and garrets among the poor, friendless and distressed, feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, nursing the sick, clasping hands with contagion, and helping trembling mortals through the dark valley, who commands from church women the most delicate attention and affectionate adoration. It is not for him that they embroider slippers, alter clothes, and compose sonnets, but for the one who takes his ease, who with deferential manners, dainty ways and sweetened words ministers to their weaknesses and vanities, though he may assert his masculine supremacy by occasionally castigating them from the pulpit. It was not before the portrait of Lincoln or of Morse, that women burned incense, but of Montague, the actor, whose handsome face and mimic grace captivated their hearts. It was not England's Herbert Spencer, whose words in behalf of womanhood entitles him to ever grateful remembrance, that American women feted, but England's Oscar Wilde, the spindle-shanked apostle of the sunflower.

—

THE Royal Red Cross, a new English idea, consists of a cross, enamelled crimson, edged with gold, having on the arms thereof the words, "Faith, Hope and Charity," with the date of the institution of the decoration, the centre having thereon the Queen's effigy. The decoration may be worn by the Queen Regnant, the Queen Consort, or the Queen Dowager of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and it will be competent for the Sovereign to confer the decoration upon any of the princesses of the Royal family of Great Britain and Ireland; also upon any ladies, whether subjects or foreign persons, who may be recommended by the Secretary of State for special exertions during war in providing for the nursing, or for attending to sick and wounded soldiers and sailors; also upon any nursing sisters, whether subjects or foreign persons, who may be recommended by the Secretary of State for War, or by the First Lord of the Admiralty, for special devotion and competency which they may have displayed in their nursing with the army, in the field, or in naval and military hospitals. In order to make such additional provision as shall effectually preserve pure this honorable distinction, it is ordained that if any person on whom such distinction shall be conferred, shall by her conduct become unworthy of it, her name shall be erased, by an order under her Majesty's sign manual, from the register of those upon whom the said decoration shall have been conferred.

TRUST.

BY F. H.

I cannot see, with my small human sight,
Why God should lead this way or that for me;
I only know He hath said, "Child, follow me."
But I can trust.

I know not why my path should be at times
So strangely hedged, so strangely barred before
I only know God could keep wide the door;
But I can trust.

I find no answer; often, when beset
With questions fierce and subtle on my way,
And often have but strength to faintly pray;
But I can trust.

I often wonder, as with trembling hand
I cast the seed along the furrowed ground,
If riches fruit for God will there be found;
But I can trust.

I cannot know why suddenly the storm
Should rage so fiercely round me in its wrath;
But this I know—God watches all my path—
And I can trust.

I may not draw aside the mystic veil
That hides the unknown future from my sight!
Nor know if for me waits the dark or light,
But I can trust.

I have no power to look across the tide,
To see while here the land beyond the river;
But this I know, I shall be God's forever;
So I can trust.

John's Wife.

BY WILSON BENNOR.

"JANIE," said Squire Marden, "have you fed the young turkeys?"

"Yes, John," Janie answered.

"And looked after the calves, and turned the cheeses, and aired the feather-beds, and cleaned the cellar, and sorted over the apples?"

"Yes, cousin John."

"Ah," said Squire Marden, "it's a heavy responsibility to put upon one person, all these daily duties, Janie, eh?"

"I hope I do everything to please you, John," faltered the quiet girl, who sat picking over peas in a huge pan.

"Yes, Janie—yes, I've no cause to complain," said the squire, thoughtfully feeling his handsome, smooth-shaven chin, as he sat looking at the slender, pretty girl.

While Janie Lee, conscious that his eyes were upon her, changed from pink to pale and then back again, and worked more steadfastly than ever.

"Janie," said the squire suddenly, "I've something to say to you; and there's no use in putting it off."

Janie glanced up, more agitated than ever.

"I'm thinking of marrying again," said he abruptly.

Janie tried to say "Are you?" but her tongue clove to the roof of her mouth.

Poor, little, fluttering, shy thing—at that moment a flood of indescribable happiness seemed to overflow her soul.

Ever since her cousin, Mrs. Marden, had died, four years ago, and she, a girl of sixteen, had taken the helm of housekeeping into her strong young hands, she had been learning to worship the handsome, noble-natured squire.

Nothing was too much for her, when it was done for him.

Full of Carlyle's "Hero Worship," Janie Lee could have written half-a-dozen volumes on the subject, and taken Squire John Marden for the central point of every one of them.

Now and then, spurred by a kindly word, a gentle tone, she had ventured to hope she knew not what.

Oftener still, she had fallen into the deeps of despondency, until, at last, she had resolved to spend her quiet and uneventful life in Squire Marden's service, whether or not her efforts were rewarded by the guerdon she so craved.

But now—now that he looked at her with those kindly-pleasant eyes—now that he spoke of marrying again—her heart leaped high in her bosom.

Were those long years of conscientious toil appreciated at last?

Was he, indeed, about to ask her to be his wife?

"Marrying again!" the squire repeated, slowly.

"You wouldn't not object, eh, Janie?"

"I?" she faltered.

"Your position, you see, would remain just the same," said he.

"Matilda is a perfect child about the cares of housekeeping, and will, I doubt not, be pleased to retain you here as her right-hand in the house; for, as you may perhaps have guessed, I have proposed to Miss Matilda Kerr."

Janie's heart seemed turning to ice within her.

Miss Kerr, the dashing beauty who had been spending the summer at Mrs. Waller's—the handsome, dark-eyed Di Vernon of a girl, who had made fun of farms and farmers, avowed her ignorance of all domestic details as if it were a merit, and dawdled away her time in croquet, lawn-tennis and novel-reading—who declared that life was not worth having without archery-parties, charades and lawn-tennis.

The last person in the world whom one could have imagined John Marden to fancy!

"Don't fret, Janie," said the squire kindly.

"Your home is here always, wife or no wife.

"I haven't forgotten all that you were to poor Mary, before she died."

The touch of his hand upon her drooping head seemed to loose the fountain of her tears, and flinging away her work, Janie darted, sobbing, from the room.

Squire Marden looked after her, in slow, scarcely-comprehending surprise.

"Of all enigmas," he said aloud, "women are the least comprehensible.

"Once would think she would have been delighted with the prospect of some one to keep her company in the house.

"But perhaps she prefers being alone.

"Janie always was a quiet little thing."

But when she came to call him to tea, Janie Lee was quite calm and composed again—a little pale, perhaps, but otherwise entirely herself.

"Mr. Marden," said she, with downcast eyes, "I am sorry I behaved so foolishly this afternoon; but I was so taken by surprise.

"I—I am sure I hope that you will be happy!"

"You are always a kind little darling, Janie," said Mr. Marden, with a smile.

"And I am sure you and Tilly will get along nicely together."

Janie did not reply; but after the housework was all done that evening, and she was in her own room, she set herself diligently to work, writing out an advertisement—

"Wanted a Situation."

"For I never can live in the same house with the haughty beauty who has stolen John Marden's love from me," she thought, with a cruel pang at her heart.

So the lovely September days went by, and the colored leaves began to fall, and the nuts to drop softly in the woods of night.

And when October reigned in royalty over hill and mountain, the wedding-day drew near.

Tillie Kerr had been to visit the farmhouse.

"This hall is so ridiculously narrow," said the bride-elect.

"And the idea of such funny little winding stairs!

"Why, they make me think of a corkscrew!"

John Marden looked at the staircase, down which he had been carried a baby.

"And, of course," rattled on Miss Kerr, "you will have the partition between those two rooms taken down, and an archway put up?"

"Of course," echoed Squire Marden.

But he didn't know why he said it.

Janie was looking on, and there was a pained look in her face.

She was thinking how poor Mary's corpse had lain there so short a time ago—how the dear old mother, whose memory John still so tenderly revered, died in the sunny back room, just when the March snowdrops were bursting through the frozen ground.

"Though I don't know," added the bride, playing with the ivory top of her carved parasol, "but that it would really be cheaper in the end to pull the whole thing down, and build something to suit one's self exactly."

"The house is three hundred years old," said Squire Marden gravely.

"There is no house in the country so old."

"Oh, horrid!" cried Matilda, recoiling with a little theatrical cry. "The idea of living in a house that is three hundred years old!"

And she laughed and rustled away, with her jet chains sparkling, her presence leaving a faint perfume behind her; and Janie had secretely felt that if she saw much more of Miss Kerr, she should learn to hate her cordially.

The wedding evening came, and all the county people, high and low, were invited to participate in the festivities.

Mrs. Waller, from whose house the bridal was to be celebrated had done her best to give her friend what she called "a tiptop wedding."

The village band was engaged, the walls were decked with autumn-leaves, scarlet berries and evergreens; the bridal-cake was a mountain of snowy perfection, and the old clergyman, in his robes, stood waiting at the door, when Mrs. Waller came hurriedly in with a pale, frightened face, to where the bridegroom stood, stalwart and handsome, with his "best man" at his side.

"There's no use trying to hide matters any longer," said she hysterically. "Tillie has gone! Gone with Captain Swedenborg! She went riding with him this afternoon, and I made sure she'd come back. But she hasn't; and here's the telegram from London.

"Read it, some one. I haven't the heart to do it."

Lawyer Toucey, who stood next to her, put on his spectacles and leisurely perused the telegram—

"Good-bye, everybody!" it said saucily. "I am married to Captain Swedenborg, and start for Paris at noon to-morrow. Every woman has a right to change her mind, and I have changed mine.

"TILLIE SWEDENBORG."

There was a brief silence of a second or two, and then Squire Marden spoke out.

"Changed her mind, has she?" he said, in a clear, ringing voice.

"Well, I haven't changed mine.

"I came here to be married, and married I intend to be!

"If it is not to one bride, it shall be to another.

"Little Janie," to the pale girl in the dove-colored silk dress, who stood at his side, "will you take the place, in my love and my home, which this heartless woman has left vacant?

"Will you be my wife?"

To the day of her death Janie Lee never knew exactly what she answered.

She only knew that she was gently led to the bride's place; that Squire John's strong hand held here; that his clear voice spoke the responses; that she murmured her share, feeling all the while as if she were in a dream.

But when the ceremony was over, and the guests crowded around to offer their congratulations, the mists all cleared away from her heart and brain, the tranquil light came back to her eye.

John Marden's wife!

What higher happiness had life to offer her?

And when they were driving home, in the soft autumnal moonlight, she looked wistfully into his face.

"John," said she, "are you sure that you do not regret this sudden step of yours?"

"Regret it, sweetheart?" he said, tenderly pressing her hand.

"Regret that I have discovered, ere it is too late, that false, fair woman's crafty nature?

"Regret that found my sweet guardian angel at last?"

And so the nine days' wonder of Squire Marden's marriage died away.

Mrs. Captain Swedenborg never returned from Paris, and Janie and her husband live happily in the old farm-house, which never has been altered and never will be.

"It is good enough for us," says Squire Marden, when people talk about "modernizing," the place.

"It is home!" Janie adds softly. "Our home!"

And the words are full of the sweet happiness of her heart.

By Telephone.

BY HENRY FRITH.

JOANNA LISLE was a quiet, self-possessed girl, who stepped from infancy to discreet maidenhood without any intermediate period of thoughtlessness, though this was doubtless due in a measure to circumstances.

She was the younger of two children; the elder, a brother, who was wild, broke his invalid mother's heart, and ran away from home many years before.

So Joanna nursed her mother, directed the household, and then, as her father gradually became more and more intemperate in his habits, she grew into the habit of doing his work for him.

He had been for years the editor of a monthly magazine, which, though not wonderfully popular, paid its publishers well.

Mr. Lisle excused himself from doing his work at the office, saying his sight was failing, and his daughter acted as his amanuensis; and though Mr. Adams, the publisher, a shrewd but rather illiterate man, knew how matters stood, he forbore complaining, for he was satisfied with the articles furnished.

Joanna wrote readily, and she had for some time the benefit of her father's experience.

When at last both parents died, her mother's disease hastened by grief and her father's by intemperance, she applied to Mr. Adams for the position of editress.

She obtained it at a smaller salary than her father received besides she was to spend six hours each day at the office.

Mr. Adams had been too much confined under the old *regime*.

His magazine was printed at a large establishment a few doors distant and, except upon publishing days he kept but one boy in his office; so for the sake of convenience, a telephone connected his sanctum with the printing-office.

At first, Mr. Adams watched Joanna sharply; but she succeeded admirably with her work, for she was capable clever, and willing; and by-and by he fell into the habit of leaving her in possession of his sanctum the greater portion of the time, as, except his advertising to which he personally attended, his business was chiefly transacted by letter and through the telephone.

It was part of Joanna's duty to direct the compositors through this telephone.

At first she was a trifle timid, but she soon came to use it naturally, and to think nothing about it.

Her conversation was chiefly with the foreman of the printing-office; but one day when the bell rang, and she went to answer its call, she heard a strange but pleasant voice ask, "Is that you Adams?"

"Mr. Adams is absent," she replied.

"Is the editor in?"

"Yes; I edit the magazine now."

"Then you will do quite as well.

"Is the copy for next month nearly ready?"

"It is quite ready.

"Shall I send it over?"

"As soon as convenient, please."

"Is that all?"

"All; except it may be well to introduce ourselves, to shorten matters, when we speak through the 'phone.

"I am Niven, the printer."

"And I am Joanna Lisle."

"I recollect seeing your name attached to an occasional story in this and other magazines.

"Are you a relative of the former editor?"

"His daughter."

"Thanks, Miss Lisle! Good morning!"

Joanna bundled the copy together, and despatched it at once, feeling a little interested in knowing what manner of man Mr. Niven could be.

He conversed fluently through the telephone, and his voice was that of a gentleman.

As for Mr. Niven, he waited for the copy in person.

Jim, Mr. Adams's office-boy, soon arrived with it.

"Why, Jim," said he, "you're growing to be a prompt messenger, and you are looking unusually tidy this morning."

"Oh," replied Jim, pleased to hear the improvement in his appearance remarked, "I allus looks so now! Miss Lisle is very neat, and she don't like to see dirty boys about her."

"But isn't Mr. Adams neat, too?"

"Well, I s'pose so; but he rather saucy to me, and Miss Lisle ain't.

"I has to do the work the way he wants it, or he'd bounce me; but as to keepin' neat, I'm a-doin' that for Miss Lisle."

Mr. Niven slipped a coin in the boy's hand, and dismissed him.

Then he looked over the copy, curiously at first; but growing more and more interested, he read several articles to the close.

Miss Lisle had a clear, sweet voice; she wrote gracefully and well; and she was not "saucy" to Jim.

How strange!—he was becoming anxious to know her, when usually he was rather indifferent to women.

Perhaps, after all, she was a plain-looking old maid. Yet no; she had a youthful voice.

"Evans," he said, when the foreman entered, "how long has Adams had a lady to edit his magazine?"

"Three months or more, I believe, though Miss Lisle has prepared the copy for a long time—for fully two years, I should think. It is about three or four months since her father died, and she's had full charge since then.

"She seems to be a very good business woman; never bothers about the 'phone except I call, and she's always ready, when I have anything to say, to answer at once, and to the point.

"Old Lisle used to worry us about corrections after the articles were in type; he wanted this, that, and the other changed. She never does."

Mr. Niven called again through the telephone to Miss Lisle that afternoon.

She could not be old; her voice was as soft as a child's, though strong enough to be heard distinctly.

It was the same thing next day, and the next. No one copy of the magazine ever required so much discussion before.

At last, too impatient to wait longer, Mr. Niven put on his hat, and went out ostensibly to make Mr. Adams a business call.

That gentleman was out; in truth, Mr. Niven knew he would be absent at that hour, and for that reason he chose it, as he had a strong anxiety to meet Miss Lisle, converse with her face to face.

He met a graceful, womanly young girl, dressed in deep mourning. He did not like mourning usually, but to Miss Lisle it was especially becoming, fitting her slender, well-formed figure to perfection.

She had deep violet eyes, a firm but winning mouth, and a pale face framed in bronze-brown hair.

All this Mr. Niven saw at a glance, and it made a very attractive whole.

Yes, he thoroughly approved of her appearance, and that was saying much for him.

For a few moments he conversed with her, thinking he possessed a decided advantage over her, for she could not possibly guess who he might be; and then he made himself known by saying he felt himself acquainted with Miss Lisle, since they had so many pleasant chats through the telephone.

"I knew it from the first," she said, smiling; "I recognised your voice."

"How stupid I was to suppose for a moment you would not know!" he exclaimed, a trifle vexed with himself, yet pleased with her honest avowal.

Very gradually he drew her on to speak of herself, introducing the subject by speaking of her father.

A listener would have supposed him her father's bosom friend, when in truth they were only business acquaintances.

Not that Mr. Niven told an untruth, but the warm manner in which he recited a few facts gave them quite a glowing color.

It gave him a thrill of pleasure to find she was alone, and he confided to her that he was quite as lonely.

Did she reside in her old home? he asked; but he refrained from mentioning that he never knew where the old home was.

No, she was boarding; she could not afford to keep a home now.

He half thought she might invite him to call upon her; but she did not.

After all, he was glad she was too sensible and reserved to do so. He watched her face closely, thinking it was more expression than feature which rendered her so charming.

She had a staid, honest look, and there was a wise sort of innocence pervading all she did and said.

At length, when he could remain no longer, he rose, saying he would come in again to see Mr. Adams, and he left the office, wondering how he could manage to call upon her often, and not appear presuming.

If no other way presented itself, he was determined to write her, and say it was his desire to make her his wife, if he could win her affections.

If she cared for him at all, it would not frighten her to see his proposal in black and white; but if she did not, it would put an end to the matter. No, he dared not do that as yet; he must be patient a little longer.

Two or three evenings later, when she reached home, she found a bouquet of flowers in her room.

There was no name upon the accompanying card, only the words, "By telephone."

She knew the writing, and was fond of flowers. She was very lonely, too; the

more so because ever since she was out of school she had been too busy with her writing to keep up the girlish friendships she had formed, and she had no time to renew them now.

It was pleasant to feel someone in this world cared for her, even in a slight degree.

Not long after, Mr. Niven called again at the office. Mr. Adams was in, and introduced him to Joanna.

She blushed rosily, and only gave him a few words; she seemed busily writing at her desk in the corner.

Next day when he summoned someone to the telephone, Mr. Adams was there to answer, so he began to inquire about paper for the next magazine—an unnecessary query, as the copy was not yet in.

Mr. Adams answered shortly that he would attend to it as usual, and the conversation was discontinued. Mr. Adams was a widower too. What if——

He passed a sleepless night. It never occurred to him before that there was a rival in the field. Of course, Mr. Adams would have a decided advantage over him, if this were true.

There would be no more chats through the telephone if that old ogre was going to watch him for ever. He must bribe Jim to keep him informed when Miss Lisle was alone. Yet, no; that would hardly be fair to her.

And then, in sheer desperation, he called through the telephone to ask when the next copy would be forthcoming.

Miss Lisle's voice answered him rather sadly, that it was quite ready, and would be the last she should ever send him, as she was about to leave town, being suddenly called away.

The man's heart gave a great thump while he listened, and then seemed for a moment to stand quite still.

If she were going, she must leave her work because she was engaged, or perhaps she had refused Adams, and he had dismissed her in his anger, or made it so unpleasant she was obliged to go away.

"Will you please tell me," he asked, unsteadily, "why you leave so abruptly?"

"I have an uncle," she replied, "aged and alone, who is ill.

"He has begged me to come and care for him during the remainder of his days."

"Is your uncle rich, or dear to you?"

"Neither."

"You go from a sense of duty, then?"

"Yes, and because I can no longer remain here."

"Do you leave soon?"

"I have decided to go in the evening train."

"Are you alone?"

"Yes."

"When will Adams be in?"

"In an hour."

"Will you bid me good-bye before he comes?

"I am interrupted, and I want to speak with you again."

"Certainly.

"Call me when you are disengaged."

He sat down to think.

Should he wait and try to see her before she went away? Should he go straight over to her sanctum, and tell her how dear she was to him? Someone might drop in, or Adams might return.

He blushed like a bashful schoolboy, though he was quite alone.

He rose to call Miss Lisle, and then he hesitated, wondering how he should word his address.

One thing was certain—he could never let her go. He was a widower of two years' standing, he had no children, and he was in comfortable circumstances.

But how could he shout all this at her just now? Evans came in for a word of counsel, but he soon sent him away, and then the telephone bell tinkled in his ear.

He rose and closed the office-door before he touched the knob of the answering bell.

"Mr. Niven!" came softly to his ear.

"Yes, Miss Lisle, I'm here."

"I'm going now.

"You have been extremely kind to me; I thank you very much. I leave my best wishes with you.

"Good-bye!"

"Miss Lisle!"—desperately.

"I pray you think twice before you go. Stay, and be my wife. Do not be afraid.

"You care for me a very little, don't you?"

"Yes," softly, after a pause.

"Then trust me, and say yes. I promise to be loving and true to you. Can I say more?

"I care for few people in this world, and when I say I love you, I mean it for all time. Take courage, and say yes, like a dear girl, and then wait until I come."

There was a slight pause, and then the answer came very soft and low—

"Yes."

"God bless you, my dear," he said.

"In a moment I will be with you."

"Adams can be in his office and welcome," thought Mr. Niven, on his way over.

"Of course, I'd rather find her alone, bless her! but he will not be much in my way hereafter. I'm glad it's over.

"Suppose I had been such a fool as to let the opportunity pass! It would have clouded my lifetime, for once out of this place it would have been hard to find her."

Mr. Adams was not in, and Joanna was far less self-possessed than usual, though Mr. Niven thought her more charming in her pretty confusion than ever.

If he had found her cool and collected, he would doubtless have been very much embarrassed himself; as it was, he felt bold as a lion.

"And now about this uncle," he said, after convincing her that she had not been forward or immodest to answer a marriage proposal by telephone, that it was all right, and everything as jolly as possible.

"If you really wish to go to see relative of yours, you shall of course. But if it is not necessary——"

"I hardly think it necessary, since I am not to remain with him.

"He probably wished me to come because he is too miserly to employ a nurse.

"Still, I do not like to think he is alone and uncared for; because, though I am sure he has enough for all his needs, he may suffer before he will spend his money to make himself comfortable."

"I'll tell you what I'll do, dear.

"I'll engage a respectable nurse and send out to take care of him, and I'll forward some delicacies and other things calculated to cheer up a sick man, at the same time.

"No, don't thank me—even the worst of men are good to their own, and you belong to me now, child.

"And one thing more.

"Did Adams—did he make love to you too?"

"I think he would have done so had I permitted it.

"Indeed—well, that was why I was going away from here.

"And then uncle sent for me; there seemed no way but for me to go."

"Are you glad I stopped you from going?

"Come, you have scarcely given me a loving word yet, except through the telephone."

"I'm very glad," she said, shyly glancing into his honest face to see it light up at her answer.

For a few week a sort of wooing—if so it can be called after the winning—was kept up.

Then they were married, and Mr. Niven proved the best of husbands.

He was always fond of saying, because it never failed to bring a blush to the face of his young wife, that their courtship was carried on by telephone.

Why he Deceived Her.

BY JULIUS THATCHER.

IN the dining-room of a large, handsome house in Belgrave Square two ladies sat at luncheon.

The older of the two, Lady Charlton, was a beautiful woman about forty—that age which, to some, means the commencement of rapid fading, but to others the maturity of their beauty.

Lady Charlton, we have said, was beautiful.

Her eyes possessed as much lustre as at seventeen, and her dark brown hair was not as yet streaked with a single silver thread.

Her companion was her niece and ward, Violet Charlton, a lovely girl of eighteen or nineteen summers.

On the table lay two invitation-cards, and these, for the moment, formed the theme of conversation.

"But haven't we already an engagement for the twenty-third, Violet?" Lady Charlton was saying.

"Oh Aunt Clarice, I hope not!" cried her niece, jumping up from her place without ceremony, and going over to a small Japanese table.

Having opened one of its drawers, she began to rummage through a pile of invitations to dances, concerts, dinner parties, &c.

"Three this week, two next.

"Mrs. Crawford's on the sixteenth, and Lady Hurton's theatricals on the twenty-first.

"No; I thought so.

"We are free on the twenty-third!" cried Violet, joyfully, for she had not yet got over a love for dancing.

"I'm so glad we can go!" she added.

"The Duchess' ball last year was a great success.

"Everyone was there!"

* * * * * *

The London season was fast drawing to a close when the night of the Duchess of Glanravor.'s ball came round.

When Lady Charlton and her lovely niece arrived the ball-room was already full, and the dancing had begun.

The Duchess, who was busy receiving her guests, hurried forward to welcome them.

"Plenty of partners, my dear," she said to Violet.

"I must find you one."

Then as her son came forward, she said—

"Allow me to introduce you. My son,—Miss——"

"Miss Charlton and I require no introduction, mother," said the young Duke, bowing.

"We have met before."

And then, having scribbled his name on her programme, he leads her into the midst of the dancers.

Leaving Violet for a few moments, let us cross the slippery floor to a recess in one of the windows.

Two young men are lounging carelessly in its depths, watching the moving sea of waltzes before them.

Suddenly one of them—the better-looking of the two—bends forward, and cries, rapturously—

"By Jove, Melville! what a lovely girl!

"How well she waltzes!

"I wonder who she is? I must get an introduction."

"Where?

"Do you mean that girl near the door?" asks his companion, laughing at his enthusiasm.

"Bah! no!

"There!

"Wait a moment; she is behind that pillar now.

"There, with the Duke.

"Don't you see?"

"Oh, I'll introduce you with pleasure, old fellow.

"It is Miss Charlton—Lady Charlton's niece."

The other starts slightly, and a faint color rises to his handsome face.

His companion notices the fact, and it puzzles him.

Had she been an acquaintance he could easily have drawn conclusions.

"Melville," suddenly remarked the one who had first spoken, "the time has come, then, when you can do me a great service.

"It is not difficult.

"I want you to introduce me to Miss Charlton by my Christain name—Denzil—Mr. Denzil."

Melville looked uneasy.

What is this air of mystery growing up about his friend?

He hesitates, although he knows the young man to be the very soul of honor.

He would like to do him this service; and yet——

His apprehensions, however, are nearly, but not quite, dispelled by his companion, whom for the present we must call Mr. Denzil.

"Melville," he says slowly, "I solemnly swear to you that it is for no wrong that I desire to deceive Miss Charlton.

"It is only for a time, and soon you shall know all!"

The tone in which this is spoken has such a genuine ring of sincerity about it, that Melville consents.

Thus the first seeds of this little romance are sown!

* * * * * *

"If you are not engaged for this dance, Miss Charlton, will you give it to me?"

It is Mr. Denzil who speaks.

Captain Melville had introduced them.

Violet assents, and together they float off to the soft notes of "Dreamland."

Several pairs of eyes follow them as they mingle with the swaying crowd of dancers, eyes, some full of jealousy, others of admiration.

Lady Charlton's niece is by far the most beautiful girl in the room.

"Have you heard Treilani, the new prima donna, about whose 'Marguerite' all London is raving?" asked her partner as, following the example of the other dancers, they begin to leisurely stroll about one of the conservatories adjoining the ball-room.

"No.

"I wanted so much to hear her, and we intended doing so.

"But when one puts off a thing, it is never done.

"We start for Homburg to-morrow."

"So soon?" he says.

"I had intended asking Lady Charlton's permission to call."

"We shall not start till late in the afternoon, so if you——"

But as her sentence was broken off by someone coming to claim a promised dance, Mr. Denzil finished it for himself, and did call the following day.

* * * * * * *

The first gray streaks of dawn had already appeared in the leaden sky, when the guests began, one by one, to take their departure.

Violet and Mr. Denzil—for on him she had bestowed her last dance—were leaning against the bannisters in the hall, talking and laughing.

He had prophesied to her that ere long her name will figure in the Society journals, and she is blushingly refuting the idea.

"How ridiculous!" she says, laughing.

"What right would they have to use my name?

"I'm not a 'professional beauty,'"—raising her eyes to his, mischievously.

She had slightly accented the "professional," and he took her up at once.

"You don't disclaim the title without its epithet, then?"

"Mr. Denzil——"

But Lady Charlton's carriage stopped the way, and her retort.

Mr. Denzil had the pleasure of helping Miss Charlton and her aunt into it, and of retaining a certain little gloved hand in his own perhaps a little longer than was absolutely necessary.

When he called the following day at the house in Belgrave Square, he learned that Violet had persuaded Lady Charlton to stay in town a week longer.

Maybe he had something to do with it!

Who knows?

A few days later, when Violet had just come in from a drive, she found a paper addressed to herself amongst other letters.

She left it till last, thinking it a circular probably, but on opening it, found it to be one of the leading Society journals.

She turned over a few pages, never dreaming of connecting it with the conversation of the other night, when suddenly her eyes caught a marked paragraph, and a deep blush rose to her face as she read:—

"The Duchess of Glanravon's ball took place on the 23rd, and went off with great *eclat*. The Duchess always manages to secure pretty faces at her balls, and Miss Charlton, a new beauty, made quite a sensation. Her dress was one of the prettiest in the room, we thought, being composed of pale pink satin, tastefully combined with ——."

And so he had prophesied truly!

It was autumn!

Three months had elapsed since the Duchess of Glanravon's ball.

Lady Charlton and Violet having just returned from Homburg, where they had passed a few weeks, were once more at home in their country house, situated about twenty miles to the east of the great metropolis.

Now, it so happened, by the merest chance, that Mr. Denzil had also chosen Homburg in which to pass the same weeks, and stranger still that he had fixed upon the same hotel.

So Violet and he had renewed the acquaintance commenced at the ball.

One oppressively hot day—too hot to think of going out till the evening—Lady Charlton, Violet, and Mr. Denzil, were sitting in the drawing-room at the hotel.

Violet was reading, and the other two were talking at the other end of the room.

Violet had just turned over another page of her novel, when she heard Mr. Denzil say to her aunt—

"I have a confession to make, Lady Charlton, if you can——"

"Not all the confessions in the world," she thought, "could interest her half so much as the harrowing situation in which the heroine of the book was at that moment."

She read on.

The interest increased, when the chapter came abruptly to a close, and the next she found to her vexation was upon a different subject.

"You did quite right in deceiving her!" Violet heard her aunt say.

"Whom?" asked the girl from across the room.

They started as if discovered in some conspiracy, and made an evasive reply. She did not press her inquiries, and both seemed relieved.

This little episode had happened about a month before the opening of this chapter, at the beginning of which we stated that Violet and her aunt were once more at home.

On this particular afternoon, Lady Charlton had driven into Lesdale, a neighboring village, and was not expected home till late.

Violet was sitting in one of the great windows of the drawing-room.

The book which she had been reading had fallen from her hand, and she seemed lost in thought.

Her deep blue eyes, with their long black lashes, had a far-off look in them; their expression was sad.

She was thinking of a secret trouble, now so often present to her.

"Oh, if I could only recall those words!" she muttered.

Very lovely did she look as she sat there dreaming, with the sunshine lighting up her golden hair, and making it shine with more lustre.

A footman brought in five o'clock tea.

Violet roused herself from her reverie, poured herself out a cup of tea, stirred the fire impatiently, and went on with her novel.

But her mind was evidently not fixed upon its contents.

She read the same page over three times without being the least aware of it.

The little Dresden time-piece on the mantelpiece struck five with silvery chimes, and Violet closed her book with a slam, and flung it down on the sofa beside her.

"I do wish he would come!" she muttered to herself as she languidly crossed the room, and seated herself at the piano.

(He, be it known, meant Mr. Denzil, who was coming to stay with them.)

Violet played two or three little bits from different operas, and then began "Dreamland," now her favorite waltz, but soon wandered off to

"Do you remember the place where we met, long long ago! long ago?
Ah, yes! you told me you ne'er would forget! long, long ago! long ago!
Then, to all others, my smile you preferred;
Love, when you spoke, gave a charm to each word;
Still my heart treasures the praises I heard, long, long ago! long ago!"

As her voice dipd away on the last note, she gave the keys an impatient crash, and repeated aloud—

"I do wish he would come!

"But, of course, he has missed his train—men always do!"

"Do they?" asked a laughing voice behind her, and Mr. Denzil advanced to the piano.

"And, pray, are women exempt from that fault?"

Violet crimsoned.

He had heard!

"I didn't hear you come in," she faltered.

"Wasn't your train rather late?"

"I believe so.

"But really I am not sorry."

"Why not?" Violet inquired, quite innocently.

"Because I would not have missed hearing that song for worlds, and," with a wicked smile, "what you said after singing it."

* * * * * *

Violet, whom her aunt allowed to ride without a groom, on condition that she should never leave the domain, was one lovely day, a few weeks afterwards, enjoying a gallop on Orien, when she suddenly came face to face with another rider, and that rider was Mr. Denzil.

The girl, hesitating as to the propriety of riding with him unattended, suddenly remembered that she ought to be "practicing," and turned to leave him, but he detained her.

"Don't go!" he exclaimed.

"I must."

"No, Violet, don't!"

And in a moment, she never knew exactly how, he had drawn his horse alongside of hers, and she was in his arms.

"Violet—darling Violet!"

And then, as if waking from a dream, she pushed him from her.

"Don't—oh, don't!" she said piteously, and burst into tears.

"Oh, Violet," he said, "I want you to be my wife!"

"I can't!" she wailed.

"Why?

"Do you dislike me?"

"No, no!" she cried.

"I don't want to pain you. Heaven knows!"

She paused, her face full of anguish, her voice choked by the intensity of her emotion.

"Don't press me!

"Listen!

"A few days before my father's death he called me to his beside.

"He told me that a marriage had been arranged between a certain Lord Tresslian and myself.

"He begged me to promise that I would consent to it.

"I could not find it in my heart to refuse.

"I promised.

"I did not know then," she continued, hoarsely, raising her eyes, more lovely than ever, to his, "what pain the keeping of that oath would be, for I do love you—oh, so much!"

The little golden head fell forward on her horse's neck.

In a moment his strong arms were about her again.

"You do love me?" he cried. "Then do not regret your promise.

"I have also to confess something to you.

"I have deceived you.

"I knew, of course, of that marriage arrangement, for my Christian name, not my patronymic, is Denzil.

"I am no other than Lord Tresslian himself!"

Old Memories.

BY WILSON BENNOR.

AND you'll manage it if you possibly can?"

"Yes, of course.

"Now do go, dear. I've been here quite long enough."

"Nonsense!

"Come here, Madge; I want you particularly."

"Oh, don't, Rex!"—the last exclamation having rather a smothered sound.

* * * * * * *

"Alice, do shut that door.

"Those people seem to think that everyone must be as impervious to draughts as they are."

And as her younger niece rose to obey, Miss Owen said sharply, "and why on earth does she call him 'Rex,' instead of his own name?"

"Some love-nonsense, I suppose," said Alice, with a yawn; "they are silly enough for anything."

And she went back to her book, while her aunt went on with her knitting, and thought of Alice's words.

"Some love-nonsense."

Ah! she could remember the time when she had stood by that very hall-door where Madge and her lover stood now, quite as happy, quite as thoughtless, and quite as contented.

What a long time it used to take Harry to say good night, and how she used to watch until he was quite out of sight under the dark trees of the avenue!

It was all pure happiness until Rosamond came.

Somehow, things never seemed the same afterwards.

Harry used to wait longer and longer to hear some favorite piece of music—and Rosamond played so beautifully—so the good night talk grew shorter and shorter every day.

Yet how could one grumble when Harry enjoyed good music so much.

Rosamond was very pretty—every one could see that.

So it was no wonder that Harry should admire her fair complexion and lovely hair and eyes, only it was rather dreadful to feel how plain and unattractive one must look beside her.

She seemed able to do everything, too, and every one praised her unaffected manner.

I remember (the knitting was dropped here, and the face above it grew hard)—I remember Harry telling me he wished I would try to imitate her more, and make myself more generally liked. I suppose I must have made some answer, but I don't remember.

I can only remember a blind, helpless feeling of misery and wounded pride and love.

I could not have changed so much in a few days, and Harry had always till now declared that I was the dearest and best of all to him, and he wondered everyone did not fall in love with me.

I knew that was nonsense, but what was this?

I went away soon after, and cried as though my heart would break, and I remember saying over and over, "Oh, not Harry—not Harry!"

It seemed as if I could give up everything else if I might keep his love.

I was very dull and stupid all that evening.

And though he kissed me when he said good night, it did not comfort me much, seeing that it was accompanied by

"I wish, dear, you wouldn't make yourself miserable about nothing, and would try to take advice instead of sulking over it."

They were hard words, I thought; but I tried to do as he said, though every day I felt more and more sure that the love which had been mine was given to Rosamond, and at last our engagement was broken off.

It is curious that the remembrance of that day should make me shiver now after so many years.

But I suffered very keenly.

Rosamond went away, and soon afterwards we heard that she and Harry were engaged.

I remember hearing that the people did not think I could have cared for Harry much.

I took everything so quietly. I was glad they thought so.

Why should they have any idea of the bitter heartache I seemed always now to feel?

It was a little comfort that they should blame me instead of Harry.

Then, one day, a letter came, telling of Rosamond's hasty marriage to a man many years older than herself, but very rich.

There was no word of Harry; and I think I grieved more for him than I had ever done for myself.

I loved him still—how dearly no one guessed—and I tormented myself day by day with thoughts of him and his disappointment.

I am so thankful that I saw him again!

My mother came to me one morning to tell me that a woman was waiting to see me who would give no name or any message, but begged that I would come to her directly.

I ran down, for something seemed to tell me the message concerned the one I loved so well, and I knew it was so the moment I saw Mrs. Lewis, Harry's old nurse and housekeeper.

She came to me, and taking both my hands, she said—

"Miss Ruth, I am come to give you fresh pain.

"I do not know how to soften my message.

"Perhaps the shortest way is the best.

"Master Harry is dying, Miss Ruth, and he begs, if you can so far forgive him, that you will let him see your face once more."

For one moment I felt as though my senses had deserted me, and then I felt how precious the moments were, and that the time for grief would come afterwards.

It all seems like a dream. My mother went with me.

I remember hearing my mother say to Mrs. Lewis—

"It will kill her."

And a reckless hope that it might sprang up in my heart, and helped me to keep calm and brave.

I heard my mother asking how the accident had happened.

The old lady could only tell her that three days before her master had gone for a ride in the morning, and in a few hours had been brought home unconscious, with a dark purple bruise upon his forehead; that the doctor had given no hope of his life from the first.

That as soon as he had recovered his senses he had sent to me, that he might see me before he died.

We reached the end of our journey at last, and to Mrs. Lewis's eager question the man replied—

"Just as you left him. The doctor is with him now."

Mrs. Lewis went up-stairs, returning in a few minutes with the doctor, whom she left with my mother, saying to me, "Miss Ruth, will you come?"

I trembled so that I could scarcely follow her, till she said—

"He has asked to see you alone, my dear. Can you bear it, or shall you be afraid?"

"No," I said; "I would much rather be alone."

So she quietly opened the door, and I went in.

All thought of Rosamond had fled.

I went up to my darling, and took his hand in mine.

"My good angel!" he whispered, "my darling Ruth!"

And then an expression of pain came across his face, and he added—

"Not mine now; I have forfeited that!"

I think all the love I had ever felt for him came upon me in twofold force; and kneeling by him, I told him how fully I forgave him; how dearly I had always loved him, and how I loved him then.

"I cannot believe it; I am not worth it!" he said, sadly.

And I did not know how to comfort him.

"Harry," I said, "did you think I should come?"

"Yes; I knew you would!" answered he.

"Why were you sure, Harry?" I asked again.

"Because you were always so forgiving and good, darling!"

"And because you knew as soon as you were awakened from that bad dream that we still loved each other, just as we did in those happy days which seem so long ago?"

"Faithful until death!" he whispered; "my own true love!"

So we stayed for a little while.

I could not think then how near our separation was.

I could only thank God for giving us back to each other.

In those few precious days Harry told me all the story of his infatuation for Rosamond.

How quickly he had repented of it, and how often he longed to break off the engagement, even though he knew there would be no chance of having me for his wife.

Then, in a fit of pique at some real or fancied neglect, she threw him over, and accepted, and was soon after married to her rich lover.

"I was not sorry for her, Ruth," he said.

"I don't think she ever really cared for me.

"It was more to prove her power of fascination than anything else that she won me from you.

"Weak fool that I was," he added, bitterly, "to lose my life's happiness for the sake of a dream!

"How I longed for you, my darling, I can never tell you, but I dared not ask to see you till now; and when I knew that in a few days I must die, I could not go without a last word from you, and now it seems harder than ever to say good-bye."

It was a very sorrowful week, and my lover grew more feeble every day, and even I could see how near the end must be.

It came very quietly and mercifully at last.

We were watching the sunset, as we often did, and, as it sank lower and lower, Harry said—

"I shall never see another sun, darling!"

"No," I answered; "but I shall see many, perhaps, and to me they will always speak of you.

"But some day I shall see my last, and then I shall come home to you."

"Ruth," he whispered, soon afterwards, "it is growing so dark; come closer to me."

I knelt beside him, so that his head might rest on my shoulder; and so we waited together.

I wonder I lived through those hours to feel that in a few moments he would be gone from me—that never while I lived should I hear his voice or see his face again—made me feel as though I must cry aloud in my agony.

Still I waited quietly, till just as the sunset glow was dying out of the sky, he turned his face towards me, and with a look of passionate, longing love, signed to me to kiss him.

"Good-bye," he murmured, "my wife that was to be!"

"Oh, Harry," I said, "I am your wife in heart and life-long love!

"All my love is going with you, my darling!"

I cannot tell what followed.

I know my mother and Mrs. Lewis were with me, but till he died I never left my place beside him, and then I suppose I must have fainted.

But I have kept my promise, and old woman as I am now, Harry is still "My Harry" to me.

How soon, I wonder, shall I see him again?

* * * * * * *

There was no sharpness in the old lady's voice as she said "Good night!" to Madge, and asked if she had had a happy evening.

Something in her tone made the girl's eyes fill with tears in her eyes—

"So very happy, auntie; he does love me so!"

And the answer was, "Then, thank Heaven for it, dear!

"True, constant love is the greatest earthly gift he can give you."

I had severe attacks of gravel and kidney trouble; was unable to get a medicine or doctor to cure me until I used Hop Bitters, and they cured me in a short time.—A distinguished lawyer of Wayne County, N. Y.

From Washington (N. J.) Star, July 18.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE STAR.—Please allow "a stranger within the gates" of your city a small portion of space to express his astonishment and gratification on a visit to the principal industry of your town. I refer of course to the Beatty Organ Factory.

To a stranger who enters the handsome building, hears the wonderful hum of the hundreds of intricate machines, sees the many hundreds of intelligent mechanics industriously at work, witnesses the process of making an organ in all its multitudinous details from the lumber in the dry house to the completed organ boxed and ready for shipment, the next object of interest is to see and hear the wonderful result, a proof of whose untiring energy, ambition and perseverance can be found in this vast monument dedicated to the fine arts, and exemplified in music.

I found Mayor Beatty at his office. I had no introduction but could see at a glance that anyone visiting such an establishment was made to feel thoroughly at home without this formality. He received me with a cordial grasp of the hand, inquired briefly from where I came and whether he could be of any service to me. My visit of a few minutes was subject to constant interruptions. Clerks were bringing in important matters for his consideration. He glanced at the documents while conversing with me and at once gave his instructions concerning the matter in hand. Messenger boys came running in, the telephone rung loudly at frequent intervals; other visitors anxious for a glance at the Mayor arrived, and at length I took my leave, congratulating myself on my brief but memorable interview with a great man, the pleasing recollections of which will remain with me as long as I live.

Subsequently I gathered from a few friends some facts concerning the wonderful career of this more wonderful man. The life of Daniel F. Beatty as narrated by those who have known him since boyhood reads like a romance. Indeed there is nothing more improbable in the stories of the Arabian Nights than the story of his marvelously successful career. Only seven years since the proprietor of a candy store; now the sole and absolute owner of the largest organ factory ever built, employing altogether in the neighborhood of a thousand people, and whose name is known and mentioned with respect in every civilized clime.

It was my fortune on one of the evenings when I was in your town to pass the Beatty Manufactory at about nine o'clock. The day had been very hot, but although the edifice was brilliantly illuminated by the aid of several hundred Edison electric lights and the factory was in full operation, the temperature was as cool in the building as on the outside. Inquiry revealed that the electric lights give out no heat, a fact which was new to me and possibly may be to some of your readers. The electric lights were very beautiful and Aladdin with his wonderful lamp never conjured a more brilliant picture.

I learned that the sales of all the Beatty Organs were immense, but I was not prepared to hear that the Beethoven Organ had attained such a great degree of popularity—nearly fifteen hundred of this style being shipped every month. I examined the shipping book and found that orders were frequent from foreign countries, Canada, the West Indies, Mexico, South America, nearly all the nations in Europe, the Island of Madagascar, Calcutta, Bombay (India) Natal, Cape Town and Zanzibar in Africa, Hong Kong and other cities in China and Japan, New Zealand, Australia, Sandwich Islands, etc., etc. I was permitted to see a portion of the correspondence from these far off regions and found that many of these orders were obtained from missionaries or through their aid. The Superintendent informed me that in addition to the thorough tests which are made of every organ before shipment, extraordinary care is taken with instruments destined for foreign countries where facilities for repairing organs are not to be found.

So much has been said by Mr. Beatty's rivals about the numerous stops in the Beethoven Organ that I was induced to examine in the most complete manner the entire organ. I found the action perfect, the 27 stops were all there and I have no hesitation in giving my opinion that no one can be omitted without impairing the musical qualities of the organ. Indeed the many musical combinations which can be obtained by the proper use of the 27 stops accounts in some degree for the great popularity of this great organ. I have not space to refer to the facts that [illegible] working parts of the organ [illegible] bellows, pedals, metal strips, etc., [illegible] of the most durable materials and in the very best manner. The case was exquisite in design and the workmanship exhibited in the whole organ was, so far as I could judge, perfect.

I am glad I called there. I have been asked many times regarding the Beatty Organ. I can now answer these questions intelligently, and grateful as I am to Mayor Beatty for his cordiality and willingness to throw open his entire business for my inspection, I shall take great pleasure in recommending his organs, not only on account of their very superior excellence, but also because of his very low prices which bring these incomparable instruments within the reach of persons in moderate circumstances. "Be it ever so humble there is no place like home" and a home is not complete without an organ. No other investment can be made which will pay so well in the refining influences to a family, to say nothing of dollars and cents, as the purchase of a Beatty Organ. Pardon the length of this communication but a page in your paper would be insufficient to express my delight at what I have seen and heard during my brief stay in your pleasant town.

SAVANNAH.

ELECTRIC CARS.—The first tram-car propelled by electricity was tried successfully last month at Kew, England, in the presence of thousands of curious sightseers. The car was of the usual street type, carrying forty-six passengers. It weighs with its apparatus four and a half tons. The secondary batteries or cells are placed beneath the passengers' seats, and those cells are in electrical communication with a dynamo-machine placed beneath the car, which gives motion to the wheels. The car is lighted by electric lamps, and is fitted with [illegible] deriving their power from the [illegible] boxes beneath the seats. It is claimed that this car can be worked at one-third the cost required to horse an ordinary car.

Do not waste your money, and risk injuring your hair by purchasing useless washes or dyes, but try something that has a record of fifty years that everybody knows is sure to do good. Hall's Hair Renewer will invigorate, strengthen, and beautify the hair, restore its color if faded or turned gray, and render it soft, silken and lustrous.

Our Young Folks.

DICK AND HARRY.

BY PIPKIN.

WHAT is your idea of perfect happiness, I wonder.

I will tell you mine.

To be a duck on a fine hot May morning, and run, no, waddle down to the water, and after a little run go splish, splash into it.

You see there is no pleasure even to a duck in swimming about in a pond on a cold winter day, (supposing a thick surface of ice does not cover the water, and make such swimming impossible), and so for some months half the pleasure of a duck's life is gone, and the creature can only waddle about the yard—suffering from a sad sense of inferiority to the hens and cocks that hop and run and strut so briskly.

But when the sun rises cloudless in a May sky then the ducks have their turn, and can laugh at the fowls that only strut or fly.

Down they go to the pond, a whole family of them perhaps, father, mother, and ever so many young ducklings, and even as they go the cocks and hens fancy they have the advantage of them, and many sneer at their waddling gait.

Wait a minute, cocks and hens, see how the waddling creatures glide off with easy grace on the surface of the smooth water, see how they flutter their feathers about, and splash delicious fountains over themselves as they do so.

Who can enjoy the heat of a summer day like a duck?

Not you, you poor things hopping about on gravel, shut up perhaps in a poultry-yard, with a distant glimpse of the cool fresh lakelet, on which the proud happy ducks freely disport themselves.

Alas, all enjoyment is liable to be interrupted, even that of ducks, on a May morning, when he has just taken to the water.

We all know what the frogs said to the boys, and many a duck has had cause to repeat the same with the most sorrowful of quacks—a duck's sigh.

But before I tell you what Dick and Harry did (alas, for all birds, not only for ducks, that there are so many Dicks and Harrys in the world!) you may like to hear what little Dora Praed's feelings were about ducks.

She was a very dear wee child of six years old, with the most comfortable fat round face you can imagine, a pair of innocent blue eyes, and a sweet little cherry-red button of a mouth.

She was a very good little girl too.

But she had one very earnest wish, so earnest that it might almost be called a passionate wish, and as it had never been granted, and as there did not seem a chance that it ever would be granted, it did sometimes make her feel a trifle low.

You will never guess what that wish was, so I think I had better tell you. It was to have a duck of her own.

She would look out of the nursery window and stand in the flower garden, and see Mr. and Mrs. Duck, and all the Masters and Misses Ducklings, waddling down to the pond, and she would fix her wide-opened innocent blue eyes on them, clasp her little hands together, and say very earnestly—

"Oh, that I had a little duck of my own!"

Dick and Harry were fond of ducks also, uncommonly fond, but then it was in their own way, and not in little Dora's, and their way was this:

They liked to go down to the water's edge, and to pick up stones and fling them down in among the rushes, to frighten the old ducks away from their nests, if there chanced to be any nests there, with old ducks sitting upon their treasures within them.

And then if there were, and Mr. and Mrs. Duck left their home duties, and swam affrighted away, Dick and Harry would laugh at all their fussy splashes as they went, and would send stones whizzing after them, before they themselves rushed down in among the rushes to find the nests, and then afterwards carry the eggs away as trophies.

Ah, that was not the way in which little Dora loved ducks.

"Green grows the rushes, oh!" sang Harry one very beautiful May morning.

"Come along, Dick.

"Let's go down among them and hunt for ducks' eggs."

No sooner said than done.

Who so willing as Dick?

To be sure he had a lesson to learn.

He had been turned back in school and given a task to bring home with him, a fate that very often befell Master Dick.

But what of that?

The lesson-book was gleefully thrown to the other end of the room.

The task could be learned at any time nothing to his view of the subject, when the fine weather was far better employed in chevying ducks than in study.

So off rushed the two boys, as joyous as sparrows, as joyous as skylarks, and as busy as bees, down to the pond, with the blue sky over their heads, and the spring breeze flattering round them, only stopping now and again to pick up a particularly tempting stone that lay on their way.

Little Dora was in the garden as full of joy and business as they were, for with her she had taken her mamma's basket and her mamma's umbrella, out of which two articles she had often and often got not a little pleasure.

"May I take them, mamma?

"May I just this once?" she had asked, in her eager way, as if everything depended on her wish at that moment being granted.

"I can't think what you want with them, Dora," mamma replied, laughing.

"Look at the sky.

"Is there a cloud?

"You don't expect it to rain, do you Dora?"

"Mamma," answered Dora, "I take them to market.

"I am a market-woman.

"I have very beautiful things in my basket to sell, and I must have an umbrella.

"I couldn't go to market without an umbrella.

"Could I, mamma?"

"And who buys your goods, Dora?" asked mamma.

"Sometimes the robins do.

"If my stall is under the chestnut the robins always come and perch, and hop, and look.

"And now and then a bee or a butterfly.

"Once the sweetest little bit of a blue butterfly perched for minutes and minutes on the handle, and bought them all.

"He did indeed, mamma.

"When nobody comes, not even an ant, then I drag Nepture up and make him lie beside the basket, and he is the market-woman, and I am the customer: and we have such talks—you can't think what bargains he makes; he is very particular about farthings.

"Oh, mamma, do let me have the basket and the umbrella; it is such a very fine day!"

Mamma consented, and happy Dora ran out into the garden with her basket and umbrella, and became as she did so the busiest and most important of market-women.

She had a very pleasant interview with a robin, who, though very hard to please, flew away quite satisfied with his purchases at last.

A large brown butterfly, with yellow marks on his wings, praised her goods, and regretted that he had left his purse behind him, and an angry bee scolded her and made a great noise about her asking too much, and she was just wondering what would happen next when her two brothers appeared in the garden running helter skelter down to the pond at the bottom of the field.

Here then was a chance of actual customers.

Boys! better even than birds, butterflies or bees.

Yet Dora knew how her brothers often despised her amusements as "girl's play," and that it was just a chance whether a thick-booted foot did not kick over basket and umbrella, instead of its owner stopping for a moment to tease her under the guise of a customer.

Still there was the chance, and the latter possibility was too delightful to be disregarded.

"Oh, Dick! oh, Harry!" cried little Dora, "I'm a market woman.

"Don't you see my umbrella? Do buy something.

"Here is such beautiful butter, only five cents a pound, and water-cresses six cents a dozen."

"We'll get you eggs for nothing apiece.

"Come along, little market-woman, and have a shy at the ducks," cried breathless Jack.

And without even stopping long enough to overthrow the basket, the boys continued their race to the pond as fast as their legs could carry them, heedless of Dora's piteous entreaty—

"Oh, don't shy at the ducks! don't shy at the ducks!"

At the edge of the water they were as happy as kings.

Stone after stone skimmed along in among the rushes, and at last one flung by Harry's triumphant hand came down plump into a nest, and flurried the birds so much that in one instant they were hurrying and skurrying out into the water and yards away, followed by a whole salute of congratulatory stones sent after them.

At the same moment, with many a piteous little tweak and tweak, out of the nest scrambled a small wounded duckling, making a sorrowful and unsuccessful effort to struggle along, and at last given even them up; and lying a miserable little creature on the grass, unable to help itself, and hopeless of help from any one else.

Poor little duckling, help is sometimes very near when least expected.

After a moment's thought Dora had run after her brothers down towards the pond.

She did not go as fast as they did, or nearly as fast.

But fast or slow she reached the pond just as the poor little duckling, giving up all hope, uttered a last prolonged moan chiefly in tweak, and laid itself on its back, casting up its despairing eyes to the sky.

No words of mine can describe Dora's feelings when she beheld this sight.

She picked it up and saw where it was hurt, and, taking her handkerchief out of her pocket, tied up the wounded limb, uttering caressing little sounds and words as she did so.

Happy comfortable little duckling! the pain went out of his leg under those tender touches, his ruffled feathers smoothed themselves, light came back into his eyes.

I am sure he would have laughed if he could, but as he could not he looked thankfully up into the small sweet face bent over him and said—

"Quack."

But such a quack as it was!

Back to the house she rushed, bearing her precious burden close to her breast, and leaving the basket and umbrella, once so dearly loved, forgotten on the grass behind her.

"Oh, mamma, it is my own, it is my very own!"

"Mayn't it be mine?" she cried breathless.

And while mamma pitied the poor duckling and said certainly he should belong to Dora, and be her very own, she suddenly stopped in what she was saying, and gave a little scream.

Dora looked hastily over her shoulder to see what it was that had so astonished and dismayed her mother, and there she beheld a wonderful sight indeed.

Two dreadful little figures all mud and wet, with two heads at the top of them, the hair on which was covered and lost in crowns of slush that lay thickly thereon, and from them oozed and streamed over two wretched little faces.

And these unfortunate beings were Dick and Harry, who had come to grief, Dick having overbalanced himself and pitched headlong into the pond, where Harry had bravely followed and rescued him.

But it takes a good deal to hurt a schoolboy, and neither of ours was one bit the worse for his mud bath.

The umbrella and basket were brought back safe and sound, and proved of the greatest use to Dora through that happy summer, for long after Duck's—as she called her duckling—was quite recovered, and could run about on his lame leg as well as ever, did his devoted mistress day after day take him about the garden and show him all the beautiful flowers and shrubs, sitting at his ease in the basket, while she held the umbrella over his head.

CRUEL FATE.

BY PERCY VERE.

THE shades of night were falling over the city of the Seven Hills, and as the gloom deepened, an indescribable feeling of melancholy came over the Lady Lelas as she sat at her window thinking of her loveless life.

Loveless?

Not quite!

True, her father, Metellus, the rich banker, was utterly indifferent to his lovely daughter; and mother she had none, yet there was one who loved her with a deep and trusting love.

Lelas rose with a sigh.

"Why does he not come?" she muttered, drearily.

Suddenly a long, low whistle fell upon her ears.

She paused.

It was repeated.

A flush of pleasure rose to her face.

She returned to the window and looked cautiously out.

"Strello!" she cried softly.

"Lelas!" came the whispered reply.

In a moment the girl had swung herself down from the window, and was standing beside a tall young Roman.

"You are late," she said. "I feared you were not coming."

Together they strolled down the garden till they reached the lake.

Unfastening a boat they entered it, and Strello rowed out from the land.

The ripples sparkled like diamonds.

"If life were always like this," said the young man, sighing, "what an Elysium it would be!"

The girl made no answer, but dipped one white hand into the cool moonlit water.

"Lelas," he said, after a pause,—"Lelas, you are not happy at home?"

"No," she replied, sadly; "no one loves me save you.

"And yet many envy you.

"You have rank, youth, beauty, riches.

"Yes," she answered; "I have all but a father's love."

"You have mine."

"Yes, Strello."

She kissed his hand with passionate fervor.

"Then listen, Lelas.

"Why delay longer?

"I love you; I am willing to marry you.

"Meet me to-morrow at this time by the Lobian Well on the further side of the lake.

"We will be married at Lystrium."

"I will come," she said.

Suddenly across the evening air there came the sound of chimes.

The Lady Lelas started, and over her face there came a look of terror.

"It is my father!" she cried, her voice full of fear.

"He wants me!

"Oh, Strello, row quickly! I dare not be missing!"

Her lover reassured her, and in a moment they were skimming the surface of the lake.

At length the shore was reached.

"Farewell, Strello!"

"Till to-morrow, Lelas!"

A hurried embrace, and then the girl sped, with trembling steps, towards her father's home.

Just as she had entered her apartment an attendant came to inform her that her father desired her presence.

"Saved!" she murmured thankfully.

And merely stopping to gather up her lovely tresses which had come unfastened, she descended to the room in which her father was entertaining some guests.

The girl bowed as she entered, and having approached her sire, demanded his pleasure.

"You have been long in coming," said he.

"Did you not hear my summons?"

"I did, my lord," she answered.

But she offered no explanation.

He looked at her angrily, but without comment.

"My guests wish to hear you sing," he said.

* * * * * * *

Once more it is night.

Lelas sat, as on the previous evening, at her window, watching and waiting.

No lamp lighted the room, though the night was dark with a darkness that might be felt.

Not a star was visible.

The moon lay concealed in a vast curtain of cloud.

In the distance the thunder rolled with a curious advancing and receding sound.

Was it an ill omen?

A vague presentiment of evil came upon her.

At length the time came, and she noiselessly let herself down from the window and sped towards the lake.

She unfastened the boat with nervous quickness, and soon her oars were urging her with swift and almost noiseless splashes across the water.

The very silence frightened her.

Still she rowed on, not daring to cast glance behind.

She felt she was followed by some dark fate.

An agonized shriek burst from her lips as a vivid flash of lightning suddenly rent the sky, and lighted up the lake from end with blinding brilliancy.

The crash of thunder which then came was deafening.

Flash followed flash, peal succeeded peal.

The girl's terror increased.

She knew not in which part of the lake she was, and burst into tears.

She stood up in the boat to await the next flash, in order to discover her whereabouts.

In her terror, her overstrung imagination conjured up thousands of dark spirits forms flitting around her.

The flash she had awaited at last came.

A weight, as though the whole sky had fallen, seemed to crush her, a dull hissing filled her ears, then all was blank.

Was this death?

* * * * * * *

Meanwhile, Strello had reached the trysting-place before the storm began.

He was too much absorbed in prospect of the relization of his dreams to note the increasing darkness; and when a sudden light for a moment flashed across the scene, he started as though he had been struck.

As the storm grew more furious, an awful foreboding seized him, as it had seized Lelas.

An indescribable feeling of terror filled his soul.

It was so absorbing that for a moment he stood as one petrified, and great drops of sweat came upon his forehead.

A crack of thunder, louder than the rest, brought him to himself.

He rushed like one mad to the margin of the lake.

A bright flash illuminated its surface.

He saw enough, and plunge into the deep water.

He struck out boldly, trusting to memory to guide him.

A few strokes brought him to the boat.

Another flash, brighter, longer, more vivid than before, showed him the form of the Lady Lelas lying prone in the bottom of the boat, one side of her once lovely face scorched by lightning.

"Lelas!" he wailed — "my love, my love!"

His arms relaxed, his face grew ashen. The water closed over his handsome head, and he sank, never again to rise.

* * * * * *

The Lady Lelas was not dead. A more cruel fate awaited her.

The night wore on and departed, and with it the storm.

The sun rose in all its glory, and cast a pitying glance on the boat and its occupant.

Is this Lelas?

Alas! yes.

Shrieks, mingled now and again with loud, discordant laughter, were heard proceeding from the lake; and Lelas, last night a lovely woman, was led home a raving maniac.

THERE are now ninety-three police and three roundsmen on the Brooklyn bridge force. Twelve of these are ex-officers from the New York and Brooklyn forces. Fifty of the men are over six feet in height. Seventy are now provided with uniforms, and all are furnished with clubs.

COLORLESS AND COLD.—A young girl down town regretted that she was so cold and cold. Her face was so white, and her hands and feet felt as though the blood did not circulate. After one bottle of Hop Bitters had been taken she was the rosiest and merriest girl in the town, with a vivacity and cheerfulness of mind gratifying to her friends.

GATHER THE SWEETS.

BY S. W.

When wandering through a meadow
Where little daisies grow,
Forget your saddest hours, my friends,
And pluck them as you go.

When crossing a sparkling brooklet,
Where purest waters flow,
Stoop down beside its brink and drink
A sweet draught as you go.

When walking in a garden fair,
Where sweetest violets blow,
Remember they are filled with sweets,
And smell them as you go.

If you should meet a lovely maid
With rosy cheeks aglow,
'Twere best to seek her out some time,
And win her as you go.

While passing o'er this earth, my friend
You'd meet with sweets, I know,
And if you'd brighten life, you should
Gather them as you go.

There is no need to sigh and fret
In a world like ours;
Blank out its saddest day, my friend,
And fill them in with flow'rs.

ANECDOTES OF CRIME.

As thieves, the Hindoos and Chinese stand unrivaled. A Chinaman has been known to seize a man's finger and cut it clean off, in the midst of a crowd, to obtain possession of a ring, and escape detection. This immunity is due, perhaps, to the great resemblance which the faces of Chinese bear to one another in European eyes, rendering individuals absolutely indistinguishable at first, as well as to an ingenious artifice for disguising a broad-bladed knife in the semblance of a closed fan, such as all Chinese carry.

Hindoos will swim or float cautiously along a river at dusk with an old basket or empty gourd over the head, whirling and twirling lazily with every eddy, and braving the crocodiles, to gain an *entree* to the bungalow they desire to plunder, under the very nose of its proprietor.

The writer once saw a coolie immigrant in Guiana, a field hand on one of the sugar plantations, towing a log of wood along one of the muddy canals or trenches which intersect the cane-pieces. He passed the manager on the path, salaamed composedly, and was plodding quietly on toward the village, when the rope hitched in a stake on the bank, causing the log to tilt up, and disclosing the fact that it was ballasted with something underneath. "Something" proved to be a coffee-pot and various other silver utensils, which had been purloined from the breakfast-table laid in the veranda of the house to await our return. In a few hours the whole would doubtless have been converted into bangles, anklets, and earrings; for the poor Indian's untutored mind is just as keenly alive to the advantages which attend the development of specie unlawfully acquired as that of any metropolitan "fence."

Two natives entered the emporium of a Mohammedan dealer in one of the Calcutta bazars and purchased a valuable shawl. They hesitated to pay for it, as it did not appear convenient for them to carry it away just then; but the dealer, an avaricious old scoundrel, fearful of losing his bargain, persuaded them to part with the money and leave the shawl, by giving them a receipt for the amount, which was duly witnessed by one of the police. Scarcely had the buyers departed when an English sailor came in, reckless, spendthrift, forcible in expression, three parts drunk, and otherwise characteristic of Jack ashore. The follower of the Prophet spoke a little Inglessh, as he spoke and did everything else which tended to the transference of rupees or annas from other pockets to his own, and was not long in finding out that Jack wanted something to take home as a present to his black-eyed Susan. Unfortunately, the faithful mariner's roving eye alighted on the shawl which had just been sold; and with the obstinacy peculiar to his class and condition, he insisted on having that and no other. In vain the merchant told him it was sold. Very well; he would walk down the bazar and try elsewhere. An exorbitant sum was named as the price. Jack did did not care; he had plenty of money. It would cost double that, he was told, to get it back from those to whom it belonged. Jack was willing to pay for all. There was no doubt that the Moslem's conscience would have allowed him to sell the shawl readily enough, but the purchasers had his receipt, and even though he returned the money, the transaction might bring him under the strong arm of the law, for which he entertained an exaggerated respect. Unwilling to lose the chance of so much profit, he bade the sailor return at a certain hour, telling him he should have the garment he so greatly coveted.

It was just as he feared. When the dusky customers arrived, they refused to accept their money back again, flourished the receipt, and threatened to appeal to the judge if their property was not at once handed over to them. A small bribe, offered as an inducement to them to forego their bargain, had to be increased to a large one before it produced any effect; and when one wavered, his companion held firm. At last the amount was considered enough to satisfy both, and the merchant found himself once more in legal possession of the shawl, with a fair, though greatly diminished, margin left for profit.

He hurried to the door to await the return of the extravagant seaman; and was just in time to see the ingenious son of Neptune, as sober as a judge, dividing the proceeds of the little dodge with his two Lascar shipmates at the end of the narrow street.

Grains of Gold.

Ambition has no rest.

The less men think the more they talk.

Those wounds heal ill that men do give themselves.

It is easier to suppress the first desire than to satisfy all that follow it.

The truest mark of a little mind is the servile imitation of others.

That is the bitterest of all—to wear the yoke of our own wrong-doing.

Death comes to a good man to relieve him; to a bad one to relieve society.

As you journey through life, remember that the side-show makes the most noise.

All the scholastic scaffolding falls as a ruined edifice before one single word—Faith

Gold that buys health can never be ill-spent, nor hours laid out in harmless merriment

He who despises praise will not be likely to practice the virtue that would entitle him to it.

Books are but white paper, unless men spend in action the wisdom they get from thought.

He is truly great that is little in himself, and that maketh no account of any height of honors.

The misery of idleness is nearly as manifest in high life as in rags and filth in extreme poverty.

A false friend is like the shadow on the sun-dial—appearing in sunshine, and vanishing in shade.

Don't judge a man by his speech, for a parrot talks, and the tongue is but an instrument of sound.

We have a thousand reasons wherewith to condemn our neighbor, but not one wherewith to excuse him.

Nothing is more important than to understand the subject about which you propose to instruct others.

Never be above your calling, or be afraid to appear dressed in accordance with the business you are performing.

The pleasantest things in the world are pleasant thoughts, and the greatest art in life is to have as many of them as possible.

The hay smells the sweetest after it has been cut down, and by the same process many Christian lives are brought to perfection.

The violet grows low and covers itself with its own tears, and of all flowers, yields the sweetest fragrance. Such is humility.

The idol of to-day pushes the hero of yesterday out of recollection, and will in turn be supplanted by his successor of to-morrow.

We often find a thousand excellent excuses for our gravest faults; but if any one wrongs us in the least, the offence is unpardonable.

The work an unknown good man has done is like a vein of water flowing hidden underground, secretly making the ground green.

Many a small man never ceases talking about the small sacrifices he makes; but he is a great man who can sacrifice everything and say nothing.

The most unhappy of all men is the man who cannot tell what he is going to do, that has got no work cut out for him in the world, and does not go into any.

The every day cares and duties, which men call drudgery, are the weights and contemporaries of the clock of time, giving its pendulum a true vibration.

Our passions act as the winds which propel the vessel; our reason is the pilot that steers her. Without the winds she would not move; without the pilot she would be lost.

It is one of the most fatal and common delusions to suppose that sufficiently happy homes, and good sons and daughters, will spring up spontaneously, irrespective of constant vigilance, discipline, care, and exertion, on the part of parents.

A year full of activity, resolution, and enterprise will offer a long and pleasant page for memory to dwell upon, while a year of bodily inaction, mental vacuity, and general supineness will melt from the remembrance like a tale that is told.

Femininities.

Women barbers should have pretty mugs.

Women are most perfect when most womanly.

One way for a woman to keep a secret—To keep it going.

A passionate woman's love is always overshadowed by her fear.

God repented of having made man, but never repented of having made woman.

"Boys and women," says an experienced observer, "always want to be where they ain't."

The graduating expenses of the last class at the Vassar College were somewhere about $400 for each girl.

A New Orleans paper avers that if the teeth are good, the mouth may be worn open with the poke bonnet.

A woman who devotes her time to making wall-pockets, has more vacant places in her head than on her walls.

The meaning of the word Kismet is Fate, as every young man whose kiss has met the lips of a pretty girl knows.

Jones' wife found a book of handkerchief flirtations in his pocket, and now he wipes his nose with his coat-sleeve.

Bret Harte's father married a beautiful, but uneducated factory girl, and he educated her himself after marriage.

An inventive genius proposes to marry a dumb girl, so that in case she sues for divorce she will have no chance to testify.

Crying at weddings has gone out of fashion. It is the father of the bride who does the crying when he comes to settle the bills.

Before marriage she was dear, and he was her treasure; but afterwards she became dearer, and he treasurer. Still they are not happy.

The last census of India shows that there are 21,000,000 widows in the realm. This large number is accounted for by reason of a law preventing widows from marrying.

A seventy-year-old citizen of Waterloo, Iowa, has secured a license to marry a fourteen-year-old girl, whose mother professes to be highly delighted with the match.

A "easiety" gusher, in telling where she was going for the summer, said: "I'm going to Newport, and I'm going to take my maid, my nurse, my two dogs, my children, and—and, oh yes, my husband."

Impecunious party: "Through to Chicago without change, eh? Well, I don't see as that's any inducement for me. I ain't got any change here. What's the use of my going so far if I don't get nothing?"

"Ma," said Mary Parvenue, "they say young Mr. Fiddlestick embezzled. What is that?" "Oh," said Mrs. Parvenue, "it's sorter embroidery on paper like what artists does in Rome and other French cities."

Cucumbers, according to the caterer of the New York Club, should be peeled and put to soak in ice salt-water at least an hour before served. The salt extracts the poison, and the ice renders them brittle, and easier to be digested.

A Boston lady who has just moved to this city, was complaining of her house. A neighbor asked her what the trouble was. "I suffer terribly from insomnia," replied the Boston lady. "Strange," said the neighbor, "in a new house, too; you'll have to get a trap." She thought insomnia was Bostonese for rats.

Somebody told a young English nobleman that to be popular in Boston society he must profess to be very fond of baked beans. And so, when he dined at Mrs. Beaconstreet's, he said in a loud voice to the servant, "Pass me the baked beans, please." There were none, of course, and the hostess said she was insulted.

A young man of Macon, Ga., while camping out with a party of friends, was heard to exclaim in his sleep, "For Heaven's sake stand aside! That p cture will kill you!" It was afterwards ascertained that his sweetheart, about the same time, narrowly escaped being killed by a falling picture under which she was standing.

A wife-beater at Turtle River, Dakota, was taken by his indignant neighbors and thrown into the river; and, not satisfied with that, they filled a large tub with ice-water and held him under until he begged for mercy. After being nearly strangled in the tub, the wife-beater promised never to offend again, and was set at liberty.

"Is not this a pretty idea?" observed a friend of Labouchere, of the London Truth, and he pointed to a little key on his chain. "Explain it," was the response. "Well," he remarked, "I am engaged; she wears a bracelet around her arm; it is locked, and this is the key." "Is it a patent safety lock?" was asked; and he said it was not.

Miss Edith has just favored the company with a brilliant performance on the violin. Miss Edith's ma (to her neighbor): "I do so admire the violin. Your daughter plays, I suppose." Mrs. De Porquet: "Well, no; Alicia can't play the violin, but she plays beautifully on the bandoline. You know she was two whole months at the Paris Observatory."

Mary Bullock got a ridiculously heavy verdict against the English company on whose railroad she was slightly hurt. But a new trial has been granted on the ground, as expressed by the Judge, that she and her sisters, who appeared as her witnesses, were so beautiful that their charms of person had completely deprived the jury of common sense.

Dr. Haley says, in the Australian Medical Journal, that, as a rule, a dull, heavy headache situated over the brows and accompanied by languor, chilliness, and a feeling of general discomfort, with distaste for food, which sometimes approaches to nausea, can be completely removed in about ten minutes, by a two-grain dose of iodide of potassium dissolved in half a wineglassful of water, this being sipped so that the whole quantity may be consumed in about ten minutes.

News Notes.

The Brooklyn Bridge weighs 80,000 tons.

Chicago eats $3,000 worth of ice cream daily.

A Boston shop-window-dresser gets $4,000 a year.

Syracuse claims to be the residence of 500 drummers.

A crocodile shuts its jaws with a force of 1,540 pounds.

President Arthur is credited with a liking for buttermilk.

This year's New York City directory contains 450 new streets.

Spring chickens are only twelve cents each in Hartwell, Ga.

Florida's cigar product for this year is estimated at $2,000,000.

Snow is 50 feet deep in Tuckerman's Ravine, New Hampshire.

Italian bootblacks are almost as thick as sparrows in New York.

The poppy is cultivated on 700,000 acres of the best land in India.

Immigrants are arriving in California at the rate of 1,200 per week.

St. Louis has abolished corporal punishment in the public schools.

Caviare is made in Germany from sturgeons' eggs sent from Lake Michigan.

The dog of the season is the short-haired St. Bernard for those who can afford him.

The Salvation Army has been forbidden to preach or sing in the streets of Brooklyn.

A Syracuse negro has sued two white men for alienating the affections of his wife.

Brush, the electric light inventor, has brushed together, in a few years, a fortune estimated at $1,500,000.

New York letter-carriers delivered 86,571,667 letters, 14,301,492 postal cards, and 323,539 registered letters last year.

P. Schumacher, the Prohibitionist candidate for Governor of Ohio, does not use either liquor or tobacco, and compels all his employees to do the same.

J. A. Wallace, living near Truckee, Cal., shot his father-in-law one night last week, mistaking him for a wildcat, which had got into the chicken house.

A New York colored man has brought a suit for damages—$250 is the sum mentioned—for eight ounces of blood removed from his arm for transfusion purposes.

The largest sheep ranche in the world is the one in Dimment and Webb counties, Texas, where 300,000 head of sheep are pastured on 300,000 acres of land.

Swindlers are said to be catching the farmers in certain parts of New York State by buying cattle, paying one-third in cash and the balance in bogus checks.

Correspondence from Cleveland states that the remains of the late President Garfield are rapidly crumbling, and that the features are already nearly obliterated.

A butcher in Poughkeepsie, New York, killed an ox a few days ago, and on opening its stomach, found therein a $600 certificate of stock in the Poughkeepsie bridge.

Five Denver young ladies ride the bicycle "man fashion," each clad in black velvet knee-breeches, woolen stockings, a polo cap and a sack coat, with low-cut bicycle shoes.

The text, if not the sermon on it, chosen by Rev. Dr. A. S. Walsh, at the Gospel tent in New York, was about as short as could be got; it was the first word of Isaiah, iv., 1: "Ho!"

A Georgia negro woman accounts for the injuries sustained by the colored people, and the escape of the whites, in the recent cyclone, by the announcement that the Lord is a white man.

A Georgia man named James Conner tested his capacity for eating eggs, and managed to dispose of forty-four, half of which were fried and half boiled. His death is expected to be the result of the effort.

A man named Knight, at Missoula, Dakota, fired off a revolver, a few days ago, in order to scare two men who were quarreling, and killed a soldier named Mahon, and slightly wounded another bystander.

An anonymous writer in Norwich, Eng., recently threatened to take the life of the Bishop of the diocese unless the latter would consent to a reduction of his salary from $25,000 annually to one-tenth of that sum.

The weapons used in a duel by Wagner and Buckhart, Missourians, were clubs, which, by agreement, were to be perfectly smooth and weigh four pounds apiece. Buckhart was hit on the temple and instantly killed.

The dying Mrs. Swift, of Rochester, Mich., desired to see her daughter married, but the bridegroom could not be brought in time. Therefore, as coming the nearest to her wish that was possible the wedding was held in her dead presence.

Nature herself seems to have grown tired of the little brown sparrow. A few years ago, in Washington, they were killed in scores by sunstroke. Now comes the report that an electric flash one day last week picked out a tree on which they were sitting and killed half a hundred of them without hurting the tree.

KEEP IT IN THE HOUSE—that it may be promptly administered in all sudden attacks of Cholera Morbus, Cramps, Diarrhœa, Colic, or any affection of the Bowels, for which Dr. Jayne's Carminative Balsam is an effectual remedy. At this season of the year every family will find in it a useful and reliable curative.

PROFESSIONAL RAT-CATCHING.

A PROFESSIONAL rat-catcher was recently interviewed in New York with the following results.

"How do you clear your house of rats?"

"If the house has a soft cellar floor I can get the rats out, but I can't keep them out. If it has a hard foundation, I hunt out all the holes leading from the sewers and stop them up with sand and cement. That prevents any more from getting in and those in the house from escaping. You see a rat is always on the move. He is never still, but goes from the sewer to the house and back again very often.

"Having made the cellar tight, I find the runway by which the rats go from one floor to another.

"These are generally along lead pipes in the walls.

"A rat will run up a lead pipe as easy as walk along a floor.

"You can see the marks of their feet on the runway.

"I nail a small square piece of tin over a part of the runway and I grease the outside.

"Now, a rat can't run up this, and he slips down when he comes to it.

"If I can't get at the runways I find the holes, and fix this wire door on it. You see it is made over four pieces of short wire laid parallel, held together by crossbars, and sharpened at the ends.

"This is suspended by the top of a rat hole.

"Coming from the hole a rat can easily lift it up and get through, but he can't go back, as the gate falls and the sharp points prevent him from lifting it.

"Now I make a rat-trap of the whole house.

"I so fix the gates and tin slides that the rat will be led into one room in the basement.

"There they are securely caught, as they cannot possibly get out. I go among them with a dark lantern and pick them up with my tongs.

"I can catch them as quicky as a cat would a mouse.

"If they get in places where I can't reach them I shoot them with this long target pistol.

"I use those little target cartridges, and it kills them every time.

"When the rats get in ceilings, I smother them out with cayenne pepper.

"I have a fumigator here which works like an air pump.

"I burn red pepper in it and pump it into the ceiling.

"The rats can't stand that, and they get out as fast as they can.

"That is better than a ferret, as ferrets are expensive and the rats often kill them. Ferrets are scary things to handle. If they bite you once you have to force their jaws open.

"When I want to catch rats for dogs I set traps.

"First I remove everything out of their way, so that they will get very hungry. Then I set the traps. Then I have another way of catching them.

"I wear rubber shoes into a slaughter-house at night and carry a dark lantern. I move softly about and catch the rats with the tongs before they have a chance to get away.

"In this way I have caught 103 rats in two hours and a half.

"If you ever get bitten by a rat, put the wound in hot water and make in bleed. Then bathe it with arnica or spirits of turpentine."

BUG-POWDER.—Get a large dredging box one that will hold about a pint of powder, procure one or two ounces of finely ground red pepper, mix with a little wheat flower, about a teaspoonful of flour to an ounce of pepper, then just as soon as the cucumber plants make their appearance dust them well with the mixture, giving the plants a look every day to see that the pepper is not blown away; going over the plants again immediately after a rain, and so forth, until the plants are out of danger.

OUTWARD BOUND.—Books.

WHEN you visit or leave New York City save Baggage Expressage and Carriage Hire, and stop at the GRAND UNION HOTEL, opposite Grand Central Depot.

Six hundred elegant rooms fitted up at a cost of one million dollars. Rooms reduced to $1.00 and upwards per day. European Plan. Elevator. Restaurant supplied with the best. Horse cars, stages, and elevated railroad to all depots. Families can live better for less money at the Grand Union Hotel than at any other first-class hotel in the city.

Humorous.

A heated term—"Hot as blazes."

Boarding-house logic: Whom the gods love die young. The gods do not care much for spring chicken.

Why was Pharaoh's daughter like a broker? She got a little "prophet" from the rushes on the bank.

"Where do all the flies go to?" asks an exchange. They have been boarding at our house this month.

A South street youth, longing for gore, and afraid to tackle a boy of his own size, struck an attitude yesterday.

Growth of the great west: "Yes," said the Chicago man, "he's a dude, but he counts in the census; don't let him be killed."

The man who dropped a tin tobacco tag into the contribution box, says that he at least deserves the credit of having put in an appearance.

SUDDEN death results from Heart Disease. Take in season Dr. Graves' Heart Regulator. Price $1.

Until one stirs about on a hot Sunday he cannot know how much people will suffer for the sake of enjoying themselves and having a good time in their minds.

A Cleveland paper says that John Senter, of that city, shot himself on the South Side. A man who can't come any nearer the centre than that had better practice.

"Yes, he was here the night before last. He just came in and registered on a towel, and went west." This was the polite way of saying a railroad man had come in and washed his face.

The President Draws $30,000 in the Lottery.

This would be the "boss" advertisement should the President on his visit to the Louisville Exposition purchase a ticket in the Commonwealth Distribution Co., there, and in witnessing the popular monthly drawing which takes place July 31st, see the number on his ticket pulled from the wheel with the $30,000 prize drawn to its number, or he might draw the $10,000, or $5,000 prizes, for there are 1,999 prizes to be drawn, amounting to $112,400. Tickets only cost $2 each. They can be obtained by addressing E. M. Boardman, Louisville, Ky.

The police of New Orleans do not trouble themselves to interfere to prevent duels. They simply insist that the affair shall take place in a field unoccupied by valuable live stock.

Weakly amateur (playing Macduff): "Ha! ha! My voice is in my sword!" Critic in the gallery: "That's all right, then, old Numbiechumps! We was a wonderin' up here where it were."

The Great Lottery War Over.

From this time on the Commonwealth Distribution Co. will withdraw from the foolish war waged by rival Lottery companies, and, attending to its own business, leave the calling of fraudulent, etc., to them. The country is large enough for all, and this war has caused the new Postmaster General to call these lottery companies "illegal and frauds," and deny them the use of the registered mails. The C. D. Co., by their fair manner of drawings, hope to merit patronage without saying anything evil against other companies. "Live and let live" will henceforth be their motto. On July 31st, in Louisville, Ky., the next drawing takes place with a capital prize of $30,000, and numerous other large prizes; as tickets only cost $2 each, everybody should have one, including their rivals, as they would be overjoyed by returning them "good for evil" by seeing them draw a big prize. Address E. M. Boardman, Louisville, Ky.

Superfluous Hair

Madame Wambold's Specific permanently removes Superfluous Hair without injuring the skin. Send for circular. Madame WAMBOLD, 120 West Springfield Street, Boston, Mass.

☞ **When our readers answer any Advertisement found in these columns they will confer a favor on the Publisher and the advertiser by naming the Saturday Evening Post.**

NERVOUS-DEBILITY

Vitale Weakness and Prostration, from overwork or indiscretion, is radically and promptly cured by

HUMPHREYS' HOMEOPATHIC SPECIFIC No. 28.

Been in use 20 years, and is the most successful remedy known. Price $1 per vial, or 5 vials and large vial of powder for $5, sent post free on receipt of price.

Humphreys' Homeopathic Medicine Co.,
109 Fulton Street, New York

AYER'S Ague Cure

IS WARRANTED to cure all cases of malarial disease, such as Fever and Ague, Intermittent or Chill Fever, Remittent Fever, Dumb Ague, Bilious Fever, and Liver Complaint. In case of failure, after due trial, dealers are authorized, by our circular of July 1st, 1882, to refund the money.

Dr. J. C. Ayer & Co., Lowell, Mass.
Sold by all Druggists.

LANDRETHS' SEED WAREHOUSE

No. 21 & 23 South Sixth St.,
Between Market and Chestnut Streets, and
DELAWARE AVE. & ARCH ST., PHILA.

Flower Seeds in large assortment, of best quality. Flower roots for spring planting. Every thing of the best for farm, garden, or country seat. Send for catalogue. D. LANDRETH & SONS.

50C. TO $2 per hour at home. No peddling. No humbug. The Secret revealed, and 15 Samples, worth $5, for 10c. (Name this paper.) Address H. E. SLAYTON, Montpelier, Vt.

30 Powders
10 Days
Treatment

Engelman's Dyspepsia Powders
A Positive Cure

Price $1.00

Dyspepsia is the Mother of the Following Complaints:

Sick Headache, Nausea, Vertigo, Dimness of Sight, Loss of Appetite, Wasting of Strength, Flatulence, with frequent Belching of Wind, Bilious Vomiting, Burning Sensation at the Pit of the Stomach, Oppression after Eating, Depression of Spirits, Palpitation of the Heart, Pain in the Pit of the Stomach, or towards Right Side, Uneasiness of the Bowels, Irritability of Temper, Sallowness of Complexion, Etc., Etc.

The Code of Ethics prevented this Infallible Remedy from coming before the public for a period of **23 years.**

It was the **Favorite Prescription** of one of our late and highly-esteemed **Physicians,** who enjoyed a very extensive **Practice** in Philadelphia from **1834** to the time of his demise in **1871.**

The secret of this Preparation was offered to the **Medical Fraternity** about the year **1857,** with a very lengthy **Thesis** on **Dyspepsia,** but was respectfully declined, owing to it approaching the **Homœopathic System** of **Treatment,** but as years rolled by it was noticed that the discoverer of this remarkable Remedy was making rapid **Strides** in his **Profession.** and it was ascertained that two-thirds of his practice was devoted to **Dyspeptics.**

Shortly after this discovery an **Unsuccessful** effort was made by many "prominent in the **Profession** to obtain the **Formula** and adopt the **Treatment."** The discoverer never forgot the rejected "**Formula** and **Thesis.**" As a devoted **Friend** and **Student I** had several years' experience in the preparation of these Powders and became sole owner of the Formula as part of a legacy. I then commenced putting the Remedy up in Packages of 30 Powders, sufficient for 10 days' treatment, and treating the poor and honest Dyspeptics free of charge. But the demand for gratuitous packages increased to such an extent that I was obliged to discontinue the distribution. But, in order that Dyspeptics may avail themselves of this remarkable Remedy at a reasonable price, I decided to give the 10 days' treatment for One Dollar, and I feel confident that no other Remedy exists that has the same action and results. The action of these Powders, when taken into the system, is directly upon the *food* during the process of digestion, *absorbing gases, neutralizing acids* and correcting *acrid* secretions, thus improving the appetite, promoting digestion and giving tone and vigor to the entire system.

They act immediately upon the chyme and chyle, the nutritive portion of the food, containing the elements and source of the blood, that vital force which keeps all the machinery of animal life in motion.

Several thousand packages of these Powders have been sold without the aid of the press or other advertising mediums, but as there are thousands of Dyspeptics who are not aware of this Treatment, I am obliged to resort to this expensive method to bring it to their notice, **and, I trust,** you will not class this Treatment with the worthless remedies you may have used. **Your Druggist** can readily obtain a package for you (if obliging) through the wholesale druggists who are supplied by my agents, Johnston, Holloway & Co., 602 Arch street, Philadelphia. Should you have any difficulty in procuring them at home, enclose One Dollar to my address or to my agents and you will receive a package by the next mail. Postage stamps accepted.

The editor of this paper can certify to my responsibility and standing.

Very Respectfully,

Frank E Engelman

LABORATORY, 1839 SEYBERT ST., Philadelphia, Pa.

SHUT YOUR MOUTH WHILE BREATHING

Nature intended that you should breathe through your Nose. Keep your Nostrils free of Foul Mucus, in order that your Lungs may be supplied with Pure Air.

A Nose clogged with Foul Mucus, Poisons every breath of air entering the Lungs. Cleanse the air passages with "**SNUFFENE**" and enjoy New Life.

"**SNUFFENE**" is put up in a handsome Carmine, Enameled Hinged-Lid, Metallic Box, (convenient for the pocket,) and retails at 25 Cents, which should induce every one to obtain it and enjoy the blessing of Good Health.

The filthy habit of Hemming, Hawking and Spitting, and the swallowing of Foul Mucus is cured by SNUFFENE

Sold and recommended by over 822 Druggists in Philadelphia.

If the Druggist in your vicinity cannot supply you, send me the amount in Postage Stamps and you will receive a box by mail. Address

Laboratory, 1839 Seybert St. **FRANK E. ENGELMAN, Philadelphia, Penn.**

"Presenting the Bride" Heard From

Browning, Mo., June 19, 83.

Editor Post—Have received my picture, "Presenting the Bride," and was surprised at its marvelous beauty. I am well pleased with it. I have shown it to several of my friends, and all say it is the handsomest and most valuable premium they ever saw.

S. W. J.

Furnace, Ala., June 20, '83.

Editor Post—The picture premium, "Presenting the Bride," received. It is beautiful, and I am very much pleased with it. All who have seen the picture think it is just superb. Expect to get you numerous subscribers in a few days.

J. B. T.

Sanderton, Pa., June 19, '83.

Editor Post—I received my premium last night, and think it very beautiful. I will with pleasure aid you in raising your subscription list, and I think I can get a great many subscribers for you.

M. A. S. S.

Grandfork, Ill., June 19, '83.

Editor Post—I received the picture, "Presenting the Bride," in due time, and all who have seen it are delighted with it. You may look for some subscribers from me shortly, as many of my friends expressed a desire to subscribe, and how could they feel otherwise, with such a paper, and such a premium!

J. A.

Brooklyn, N. Y., June 21, '83.

Editor Saturday Evening Post—My beautiful premium Photo-Oleograph, "Presenting the Bride," came duly to hand, and it is even better than you claimed it to be. I will see what I can do for you in the way of new subscribers.

J. E. F.

Hellertown, Pa., June 19, '83.

Editor Saturday Evening Post—I received the beautiful picture, "Presenting the Bride," in due time, and am very much pleased with it. It is far ahead of my most sanguine expectations. Shall see what I can do for you in the way of subscribers.

M. M. F.

Kelloggsville, N. Y., June 24, '83.

Editors Post—I received my premium for The Post, for which accept thanks. It is the most beautiful premium I ever saw.

A. B.

New Hampton, Iowa, June 22, '83.

Editor Saturday Evening Post—Your magnificent premium picture, "Presenting the Bride," at hand, and think it very beautiful. I am greatly pleased with it, and thank you very much for such a beautiful present. I have shown it to quite a number of people, and they all say it is the prettiest and richest premium they have ever had the pleasure of beholding. Will do all that lies in my power to increase your subscription list.

M. A. D.

Dulaney, Ky., June 19, '83.

Editor Saturday Evening Post—Your premium picture, "Presenting the Bride," has come to hand, and am more than pleased with it. It is by far the handsomest picture I ever saw.

J. O. Y.

Shelbina, Mo., June 22, '83.

Editor Post—I received your premium picture yesterday all sound, and am very much pleased with it. It is far ahead of the premiums usually offered by newspapers, and certainly ought to bring you many subscribers. Am quite proud of it.

W. S. F.

Sunset, Tex., June 21, '83.

Editor Post—Your premium, "Presenting the Bride," came to hand all right. I cannot find language to express my thanks to you for the beautiful premium. I have received many premiums, but yours lands them all. Will send some subscriptions soon.

J. G. J.

Christian, Tex, June 19, '83.

Editor Post—The premium picture, "Presenting the Bride" received, and I consider it grand. I have shown it to several of my friends, and each and every one of them pronounce it beautiful.

L. G.

Winnsboro, S. C., June 22, '83.

Editor Post—I have received premium, "Presenting the Bride." It far surpasses my most sanguine expectations—perfectly lovely! Will get some subscribers for you.

S. H.

Junction, N. J., June 23, '83.

Editor Saturday Evening Post—The picture, "Presenting the Bride," has come to hand, and in good condition. I am much pleased with it, indeed. I have shown it to some of my neighbors, and they all unite with me in voting it beautiful. Will send you some subscribers soon.

W. D. S.

Rioville, Nev., June 18, '83.

Editor Post—"Presenting the Bride" was delivered to me yesterday, and am highly pleased with it. We consider it a gem. Have given it a conspicuous place in our gallery for the inspection of our friends.

M. I. B.

Fort Assinboine, Mon., June 23, '83.

Editor Saturday Evening Post—Paper and premium received. THE POST is a splendid literary journal. And the picture is very handsome. Am greatly pleased with it. Everyone who has seen the picture considers it grand.

L. M. K.

Lamartine, Pa., June 21, '83.

Editor Post—Your premium, "Presenting the Bride," is indeed a beautiful gift of art, and cannot fail to please the most fastidious. Many thanks.

C. S.

Newport, R. I., June 18, '83.

Editor Post—I received my Photo-Oleograph, "Presenting the Bride," and think it very beautiful. Had it framed and hung up two hours after its arrival. It is admired by everybody.

S. M. H. S.

Facetiæ.

Border troubles—Too much hash.

To speak of a reporter as a "pencil shover" is the flattest sort of slang. The pencil must be led.

A legless man writes to us to find out what work he is fitted for. We are ready for him. Let him apply for a situation as bank cashier. He will enjoy the confidence of the community.

"What is true bravery?" asks a New York paper. It is going to the front door yourself when you don't know whether the caller is a dear friend, a book-agent, or a man with a bill.

"Yet," said the duelist, "he gave me a worse slur after we got on the field than he did in provoking the quarrel. He said he should fire at my heart, and he deliberately fired at my boots."

A Georgia justice of the peace told a granger that the code allowed him two dollars for marrying a couple. "Well," said the newly-made bridegroom, "here is one dollar; that will make you three."

A New England physician says that if every family would keep a box of mustard in the house, one-half of the doctors would starve. We suggest that every family keep at least two boxes in the house.

An exchange says: "A Mississippi dog bit off a boy's nose and swallowed it." This shows the thoughtfulness of the dog. If he had swallowed the nose without biting it off it must have proved fatal to the boy.

In reply to the Czar's query of one of the maids of honor as to how she enjoyed the coronation, the reply was: "Oh, ever so much, your Majesty; I hope we shall soon have another." The maid is summering in Siberia.

A Los Angelos rancher has raised a pumpkin so large that his two children use a half each for a cradle. This may seem very wonderful in the rural districts, but in this city three or four full-grown policemen have been found asleep on a single beat.

Hornin pains in Heart Disease. Use Dr. Graves' Heart Regulator, and get relief. Price $1, druggists.

"Captain, we are entirely out of ammunition," said the orderly sergeant of a company to an Irish captain in once of the regiments of the Union army, at the battle of the Wilderness. "Intoirely out?" said the captain. "Yes, entirely out." "Then aase firing," said the captain.

He was looking for the cashier, and asked the paying teller if Mr. Blank was in. "Gone to the Springs," was the reply, in the terse manner and courteous tones usual to bank, hotel, and various other kinds of clerks. "How much is it?" asked the visitor. The teller didn't seem to catch on.

President Arthur to Visit the Yellowstone Region.

On his way West we hope he will visit Louisville, Ky., and witness the 38th monthly drawing of the old reliable Commonwealth Distribution Company, which will take place July 31st, 1883. Capital prizes of $50,000, $10,000, $5,000. 1,900 prizes, $212,400. Tickets only $2; halves, $1; 27 tickets, $50; 55 tickets only $100. Address R. M. Boardman, Courier-Journal Building, Louisville, Ky.

"I scream with a affright when a mouse comes in sight," said the girl to her affianced, one eve. "I scream when alone in the darkness at home, and thus the monotonous silence relieve; I scream when in bed, that should wake all the dead, if my sleep is disturbed by a horrid old dream, and when, after tea, you drop in to ask me to stroll with you out in the moonlight, ice cream."

AUTOMATIC ORGANS, ONLY $5.00. Circulars free. Harbach Organina Co., Philada., Pa.

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Everything in Dry Goods, Wearing Apparel and Housekeeping Appointments sent by mail, express or freight, according to circumstances—subject to return and refund of money if not satisfactory. Catalogue, with details, mailed on application.

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Always ask for

PENS! ESTERBROOK'S.

For sale by all stationers. 26 John Street, New York.

40 CARDS, all Lap-corner, Gilt Edge, Glass, Motto, Chromo, Love Letter and Case, name in Gold and Jet, 10c. WEST & CO., Westville, Conn.

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HEALTH---BEAUTY.

Strong, Pure and Rich Blood, Increase of Flesh and Weight, Clear Skin and Beautiful Complexion Secured to all through

DR. RADWAY'S SARSAPARILLIAN RESOLVENT.

The Great Blood Purifier.

FOR THE CURE OF ALL

Chronic Diseases, Scrofula, Consumption, Glandular Disease, Ulcers, Chronic Rheumatism, Erysipelas, Kidney, Bladder and Liver Complaints, Dyspepsia, Affections of the Lungs and Throat.

Purifies the Blood, Restoring Health & Vigor.

Radway's Sarsaparillian Resolvent.

A remedy composed of ingredients of extraordinary medical properties, essential to purify, heal, repair and invigorate the broken-down and wasted body. QUICK, PLEASANT, SAFE AND PERMANENT in its treatment and cure.

THE SKIN,

After a few days use of the Sarsaparillian, becomes clear and beautiful. Pimples, blotches, black spots, and skin eruptions are removed, sores and ulcers soon cured. Persons suffering from scrofula, eruptive diseases of the eyes, mouth, ears, legs, throat and glands, that have accumulated and spread, either from uncured diseases or mercury, or from the use of corrosive sublimate, may rely upon a cure if the Sarsaparillian is continued a sufficient time to make its impression on the system.

One bottle contains more of the active principles of medicine than any other preparation. Taken in Teaspoonful Doses, while others require five or six times as much. Sold by druggists. Price $1 per bottle.

R. R. R.

RADWAY'S READY RELIEF.

The Cheapest and Best Medicine for Family Use in the World.

CURES AND PREVENTS

Summer Complaint, Diarrhœa, Dysentery, Cholera Morbus.

A teaspoonful in half a tumbler of water will in a few minutes cure cramps, spasms, sour stomach, heartburn, nervousness, sleeplessness, sick headache, diarrhœa, dysentery, colic, flatulency and all internal Pains.

—ALSO—

Inflammations, Rheumatism, Neuralgia, Headache, Toothache, Asthma, Difficult Breathing.

CURES THE WORST PAINS in from one to 20 minutes.

NOT ONE HOUR After reading this advertisement need any one SUFFER WITH PAIN.

Radway's Ready Relief is a Cure for every Pain, Sprains, Bruises, Pains in the Back, Chest or Limbs.

It was the first,

AND IS THE ONLY PAIN REMEDY

That instantly stops the most excruciating pains, allays Inflammation, and cures Congestions, whether of the lungs, stomach, bowels, or other glands or organs, by one application.

Travelers should always carry a bottle of RADWAY'S READY RELIEF with them. A few drops in water will prevent sickness or pains from change of water. It is better than French Brandy or Bitters as a stimulant.

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CURED IN ITS WORST FORMS.

Chills and Fever.

FEVER and AGUE cured for 50 cents. There is not a remedial agent in the world that will cure Fever and Ague, and all other Malarious, Bilious, Scarlet, Typhoid, Yellow and other fevers (aided by Radway's Pills) so quick as Radway's Ready Relief. Fifty cts. per bottle.

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Perfect Purgative, Soothing Aperient, Act Without Pain, Always Reliable, and Natural in Their Operations.

A VEGETABLE SUBSTITUTE FOR CALOMEL.

Perfectly Tasteless, elegantly coated with sweet gum, purge, regulate, purify, cleanse, and strengthen. RADWAY'S PILLS for the cure of all disorders of the Stomach, Liver, Bowels, Kidneys, Bladder, Nervous Diseases, Headache, Constipation, Costiveness, Indigestion, Dyspepsia, Biliousness, Fever, Inflammation of the Bowels, Piles, and all derangements of the Internal Viscera. Purely vegetable, containing no mercury, minerals or deleterious drugs.

A few doses of RADWAY'S PILLS will free the system of all the above-named disorders.

Price, 25 Cents Per Box.

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Dyspepsia, Neuralgia, Rheumatism cured. Remedies mailed on receipt of age, symptoms and 40c. in stamps. Medical Specialist, 149 W. Biddle St., Baltimore, Md.

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50 New Chromo Cards for 1884, name on, 15c., or 40 all Gold & Silver, 10c. J. B. Busted, Nassau, N. Y.

AYER'S Sarsaparilla

Is a highly concentrated extract of Sarsaparilla and other blood-purifying roots, combined with Iodide of Potassium and Iron, and is the safest, most reliable, and most economical blood-purifier that can be used. It invariably expels all blood poisons from the system, enriches and renews the blood, and restores its vitalizing power. It is the best known remedy for Scrofula and all Scrofulous Complaints, Erysipelas, Eczema, Ringworm, Blotches, Sores, Boils, Tumors, and Eruptions of the Skin, as also for all disorders caused by a thin and impoverished, or corrupted, condition of the blood, such as Rheumatism, Neuralgia, Rheumatic Gout, General Debility, and Scrofulous Catarrh.

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"AYER'S SARSAPARILLA has cured me of the Inflammatory Rheumatism, with which I have suffered for many years.

W. H. MOORE."

Durham, Ia., March 2, 1882.

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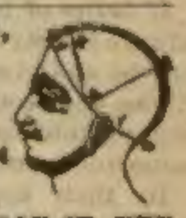

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Instructions to enable Ladies and Gentlemen to measure their own heads with accuracy:

FOR WIGS, INCHES.
No. 1. The round of the head.
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Private rooms for Dyeing Ladies' and Gentlemen's Hair.

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A KEY THAT WILL WIND — BUT WON'T WASH — AND NOT WEAR OUT. SOLD by Watchmakers. By mail, 25c. Circulars free. J. B. BUSH & CO., 23 Dey St., N. Y.

50 Entirely new styles of Chromo Visiting cards, or 40 new Panelled Gold & Silver Chromos, with name, 10c. NASSAU CARD CO., Nassau, N. Y.

40 Gold and Silver Chromo Cards, no 2 alike, with name 10c. postpaid. G. I. Reed & Co., Nassau, N. Y.

Ladies' Department.

FASHION CHAT.

NEW materials are still making their appearance, and it is only quite lately that the best of the novelties in washing materials have been produced.

These comprise, amongst others, some printed satinettes in Pekin stripes or with patterns similar to those on silks; birds' heads, bouquets of flowers, Chinese designs, etc.

Those satinettes are of beautiful quality, and when trimmed, as they usually are, with ecru or tan-colored imitation lace, they make very ladylike and beautiful dresses. Printed piques are also coming into favor again.

The style of mantle to be worn with these dresses will be the scarf mantilla with a net groundwork, in the style of Valenciennes, mechlin, guipure, or old point, with flounces to correspond round the edge.

Valenciennes and old point will be the chief favorites.

We also hear of dresses of a kind of canvas woven fabric in different shades, and shot silks, such as were worn years ago, with jackets and habit bodices of velvet cloth in the same shade.

There are charming toilettes also of surah, voile, cashmere silk, Chinese lawn, and Indian muslin.

The skirts of these toilettes are trimmed with flounces and the tunic is of broche, or else there is a tablier cut at the sides in peplum points, or forming a single point or panier fastened up on the back point of the corsage in a rounded fussy puff, from which fall two long loops and two square ends. The bodices are of broche with a long point and Renaissance waistcoat, or of plain surah in the same style as the dress, pleated like the skirt and trimmed with narrow scalloped flounces round the basques and framing the waistcoat.

This style is very pretty in light colors for young girls, and in ecru foulard for those a little older.

Etamine bands, or braid, embroidered in cross-stitch with colored silks, is used to trim dresses of ecru and undressed silk.

Ladies sometimes complain that the dresses described as novelties are so rich and costly that only the wealthy can assume them.

This is a mistake, for a particularly becoming style need not be put aside because it is too expensive, as it can generally be copied in cheaper materials by an intelligent couturiere.

For instance, none but a lady of fortune can wear dresses of the most expensive silks figured with immense designs, poppies, bouquets, animals' heads, Japanese pagodas, etc., because such a dress, even if it were one of Worth's costly creations, it can only be worn a few times, although in the autumn we shall, no doubt, find these very silks covering the chairs and settees of fashionable boudoirs.

If ladies of less ample means, however, admire the style there is a great quantity of broche and glace woolen fabrics, and even linens and cottons for warmer weather, sephyr, muslin, satoon, which are in the same colors and patterns.

By their means the fashions of the wealthy can be imitated.

Skirts are made very narrow, about 2¼ yards wide; to avoid any loss or double use of rich material the best houses drape the skirt on a foundation of alpaca or of common faille.

Similar foundations are used also for cheaper materials.

For light materials, such as zephyrs, cashmere taffetas, shot taffetas with small broche flowers, and Chinese pongees, puffed and bouillonne skirts are naturally preferred.

Young married ladies show a preference for skirts covered with narrow embroidery or lace flounces, but for light silks skirts are often made with pleats drawn into Flemish tassels, each pleat drawn in by small ribbon rosettes or lace coquilles in two or three places.

Ecru materials are in exceptional favor, trimmed with velveteen or velvet of a rich color, and lace of the new light Cordova tint.

Thus Chinese pongees will be very fashionable, and also the new material, made to imitate crepe de Chine in everything but price.

Another style of skirt for light materials is to have the material loosely draped by bows and rosettes over a foundation, the skirt being edged with two or three narrow pleatings.

The newest style of tablier is the coquille or shell, the material being mounted into the waistband in large pleats, the pleats becoming more spread out and more puffed towards the edge, where the material is turned under, blouse fashion.

The back drapery is in the same style, and should be in two parts, one from the tournure, about 15 inches long, the second reaching within a short distance of the edge of the skirt, where it is held down by bows of the same color.

A very stylish model, made in this style, is of flax gray voile, the skirt and corsage of voile, the coquille tunic of shot blue and pink taffetas, sprinkled with little broche flowers, flax gray in color.

The bows are pink, blue and gray.

Plaid voiles and zephyrs are in immense request, trimmed with velvet bands and bows.

An elegant example is of gray and pink plaid zepyr, the skirt edged with two narrow flounces, the upper part draped with a tunic pleated up on each side with a black velvet bow with many long loops and ends.

The puffed paniers and a long looped drapery behind are also of zephyr. The corsage of zephyr has very short basques, edged with a narrow velvet bouillonne, and the front is open with a velvet collar and revers to show a white lace coquille by way of plastron.

The long sleeves have velvet parements.

Embroidered voile is much used to make youthful yet stylish toilettes for garden parties, to attend art exhibitions, matinees, etc.

White voile embroidered with pale delicate colors is chosen for very dressy occasions.

The following toilette, made for a young lady of twenty years of age, is a very good example.

The round skirt is edged with two balayeuses of pale pink surah, above being alternate flounces of white voile embroidered with pink silk, and pink surah pleatings. The body of the skirt is of plain white voile gracefully looped and draped by ornaments and pendants of pink chenille, and above is a tunic of embroidered voile, forming peplum points and edged with pink chenille fringe.

The corsage is of pink surah, with points back and front.

The neck is cut out square in front, and, for evening wear, is edged with a wreath of pink may, almost buried in a ruche of white crepe lisse, and edged with a pleated berthe of white voile.

For day wear this ruche and berthe are taken off and replaced by a full bouillonne chemisette of voile.

The dress is exquisitely fleecy and becoming, and will prove very useful.

Other charming dresses for the same purpose are made of surah and pompadour satin, with very coquettish camargo paniers or of surah trimmed with cashmere bands. These last are much worn by young ladies of from eighteen to twenty, and are elegant toilettes which cost comparatively little.

As yet costumes are rather in dark colors, and generally the transition from winter to summer shades is gradual.

Hydrangea, canaque, crushed strawberry and peacock blue are the favorites, esthetic colors being decidedly in the ascendant. The colors of the fabrics are lovely but the designs are not so pleasing.

There are beautiful sprays and flowers, but some designs are eccentric and not picturesque, such, for instance, as horses', animals', or birds' heads, mushrooms, beehives, large oval spots, etc.

The following pretty costume is made partly of one of these materials, a delicate peacock blue voile, with broche horses' heads in dark brown silk.

The plain skirt is of this material, edged with a blue satin pleating and ruche. The draped tunic is of plaid surah, in large blue and brown squares, draped up with wide brown satin ribbon, fastened with a gold buckle.

The corsage is of plain blue voile, with a point in front and two long rounded tails behind.

It is braided with brown silk braid. The hat is of gold straw, lined and trimmed with brown satin, a plume of blue feathers shading the front.

Fireside Chat.

HOUSE FURNISHING.

THE housewife bent on economy and possessing a pair of nimble hands will find it quite easy to arrange a great part of her drawing-room furniture herself.

Even to re-paper a room is by no means an impossible task.

Many who would nevertheless hesitate to undertake the office of paperhanger, unless in a little back room that is seldom seen, may cheerfully turn themselves into upholsterers for the nonce, either working alone or superintending and directing a seamstress working by the day.

Nothing, for instance, is easier to make than chintz or cretonne curtains of moderate size, unless it may be woolen curtains just thick enough to need no lining.

The difficulty is increased if they are very large; but we may probably assume that the housewives who furnish the largest houses will be the least likely to occupy their spare time in the manner we suggest. A good lockstitch sewing-machine is almost a necessity in view of the long seams that have to be run, and which must on no account be puckered.

Curtains are now cut just long enough to clear of the ground, and are not looped up.

If they are intended to be drawn they must be just wide enough to meet easily over the window; if not, they need only be wide enough to satisfy appearances. In the drawing-room there will generally be a curtain-rod of some ornamental description, or, if not that, a board that should be painted to match or contrast with the wood-work of the room.

Some people prefer a kind of festooning of the material of the curtains, fastened here and there with a stitch, or perhaps a rosette; but this, though very effective if tastefully done, is not to be recommended on account of the dust it gathers.

A piece of fringe nailed to the edge of the flat board to which the curtain-rods are attached, and some inexpensive pottery standing on the board, and might for many reasons be preferred to the festoons.

Curtains are often woven to the required length, and need no making, except to sew the hooks to the top.

These ready woven curtains are often of surprisingly low prices, and look very well when they are first put up; but in selecting them care should be taken to avoid all those that have cotton or jute woven with wool, as they very soon fade in the sun—and it is to be wished that some of the windows in every drawing-room should be invaded by the sunlight for a great part of each day.

It is quite easy to cover chairs and couches with cretonne or any other material that may be preferred, and in this way many remnants of stuff may be used that would otherwise be wasted.

We do not mean to cover them with the old-fashioned "pinafore," now becoming obsolete, but to cover them in true upholstery fashion.

It is best to take off the old covering and cut the new piece exactly of the same size and shape, then to stretch it over the furniture along the thread of the material, from back to front and from side to side, taking great care to keep it from being dragged. After this it is only a question of patience and tin tacks, which last must be fine and sharp.

Their heads, when all is complete, should be covered by a line of furniture gimp, to be bought at any trimming shop, and nailed neatly down.

It takes hardly any more time than the old-fashioned "pinafore," and is very much neater.

A long, low box lined with brown paper or holland, and covered with cretonne or with some more durable material, makes a good addition to the furniture of many rooms, particularly where space has to be economised; for it serves as a seat, and also to contain loose sheets of music, newspapers, and such like, which look untidy in a room, and which yet cannot be disposed of.

These can all be made at home, and so can those newer ottomans resembling two or three square cushions firmly fastened one over the other, and which are an excellent means of using up any odd scraps of bright-colored stuffs. Much ingenuity is expended on fancy work.

Why cannot the workers make their own work up after it is finished? The making often costs as much as the material, and, as it is generally done by women, it is clear that what women do, other women could accomplish if they tried.

However, if even the first outlay is little stuffed furniture and pretty trifles cost something to keep clean and in repair, and the housewife of small means will do well to invest in some of the Austrian bent wood or other furniture where neither stuffing nor cushions are required.

Dining-room floors often have stained border and a carpet only in the centre of the room.

This looks better, and is cleaner than the carpet all over the floor.

Drawing-rooms have now not unfrequently parqueted floors, which do away with the necessity for anything more than a few rugs or mats.

This flooring can be laid down in any room over the boards, at so much per square foot. It does not mount up to a great cost—no more than might most easily be spent on a carpet.

For staining, we have found the water oak satin, sold at per gallon, by far the cheapest and best thing to use. It can be mixed with water, and so made light or dark at will, and any woman can stain a floor with it.

Some of the stains sold in bottles are excellent, but we do not find that anything like the same amount of staining can be done with them for so little money. Permanganate of potash we have also used, but two or three coats are needed to get a good dark color, and, if it is not varnished immediately, it certainly fades. Except for rooms where there is very little traffic, we do not find size and varnish so good as the old-fashioned beeswax and turpentine mixed to the consistency of cream, and applied with a flannel about once a fortnight.

Correspondence.

BEN, (Phila., Pa.)—You are wrong. Standard gold consists of twenty-two parts gold and two of copper. Gold is too soft to be used quite pure, and requires an alloy to harden it.

HARCOURT, (Chester, Pa.)—It is said that Sir Walter Scott received more money for his writings than any other author who wrote in the English language. He is reputed to have received the enormous sum of one million dollars, and yet he died poor. The second place on the list would probably fall to Macaulay or Dickens. It is reported that Dickens accumulated a fortune of over five hundred thousand, but a portion of it came from the profits on his public readings and his investments. He was a good business man as well as a genius.

WILLIAM, (Mason, Ill.)—You seem to be afflicted with shyness to an unusual degree, but still your case is not hopeless. Cultivate all the outdoor and indoor social accomplishments popular among your acquaintances. Join or organize clubs for these pursuits, and even if it is a trial for you to do so, take your fair share of the duties connected with the management of the entertainments. This course will bring you into contact with young people of your own age, without putting you to the necessity of entertaining or being entertained by mere conversation, and in time you will make friends, and find your shyness insensibly disappear.

ARTIS, (Brooklyn, N. Y.)—To write to anyone, against the expressed wishes of your parents, is certain to do you harm in one way or other. If you defy your parents' authority and write openly, you will cause them much pain, and if you are at all a good girl, this will make you unhappy and spoil all your home-life. If, on the other hand, you correspond secretly, you will commit yourself to a course of deception towards those who love you, and whom, we hope, you love, which will lower your whole moral tone, and which may be the first step in complications of folly to which it would now seem impossible that you should ever stoop.

F. B. T., (Chicago, Ill.)—You should say, "Twenty couples were present;" there is no more reason for saying "twenty couple" than for saying "twenty girl." It is true that usage permits the use of "brace" and some similar words, in the singular, where the use of the plural would be expected, as "Two brace of duck," but usage must be very long and widely established to justify any form of speech which violates the ordinary rules of grammar. You should not, for instance, allow the fact that a boot and shoe dealer, in a hurry of taking stock speaks of "three pair of boots," lead you at your leisure to speak of "three pair of doves," or "two pair of lovers."

T M. L., (Chester, Pa.)—The gorillas are the terror of Africa. They are man-haters, and kill them for the love of it, leaving the body, never eating it. Their strength is so immense they can bend the barrel of a rifle. Only one live one was ever taken out of the country, and that soon died. Several have been shot, but they are tough customers, and the natives dread them more than any animal of the African forests. The gorilla has a bed like a hammock, and swings in the trees; he is the sworn enemy of the elephant, because each derives its subsistence from the same source. When he sees the elephant pulling down and wrenching off the branches of a favorite tree, the gorilla steals along the bough, strikes the sensitive proboscis of the elephant a violent blow with his club, and drives off the clumsy and startled giant, shrilly trumpeting his pain and rage through the jungles of the forest.

FLORIE, (Logan, W. Va.)—The pearls which are found in oysters are sometimes called the "tears of oysters," and on examining you would find that there are dark and dingy pearls as well as white and brilliant ones, the former being found on the dark shell of the fish, and the latter upon the smooth inside shell. The smooth glittering lining upon which the fish moves is known as the nacre, and is produced by a portion of the oyster called the mantle, known practically by gourmands as the beard of the oyster. When living in its glossy house, should any foreign substance find its way through the shell to disturb the smoothness so essential to its ease, the fish coats the offending substance with nacre, and a pearl is thus formed. The pearl is, in fact, a little globe of the smooth, glossy substance, yielding ordinarily to smooth the narrow house to which his nature binds him, but yielded in round drops, real pearly tears if he is hurt.

E. T. M., (Toland, Conn.)—Wild-goose chase was a term used to express a sort of racing on horseback formerly practiced, resembling the flying wild-geese—these birds generally going in a train one after another, not in confused flocks as other birds do. In this sort of race the two horses, after running twelve score yards, had liberty, which horse soever could get the lead, to take what ground the jockey pleased, the hindmost horse being bound to follow him within a certain distance agreed on by the articles, or else to be whipped in by the triers and judges who rode by, and whichever horse could distance the other won the race. This sort of race was not long in common use, for it was found inhuman and destructive of good horses when two such were matched together. For, in this case, neither was able to distance the other till they were both ready to sink under their riders. The mischief of this sort of racing soon brought in the method now in use, of only running over a certain quantity of ground and determining the wager by coming in first at the winning-post.

A. A. R., (Boston, Mass.)—Yes, it is said to be a fact that glass can be cut under water, with great ease, to almost any shape, by simply using a pair of shears or strong scissors. In order to ensure success two points must be attended to—first and most important, the glass must be kept quite level in the water while the scissors are applied; and, secondly, to avoid risk, it is better to begin the cutting by taking off small pieces at the corners and along the edges, and to reduce the shape gradually to that required, for if any attempt is made to cut the glass to the shape, as one would cut a piece of cardboard, it will be most likely to break just where it is not wanted. Some kinds of glass cut much better than other; the softer glass is the best for this purpose. The scissors need not be at all sharp, as their action does not depend on the state of the edge presented to the glass. When the operation goes on well the glass breaks away from the scissors in small pieces in a straight line with the blades. This method of cutting glass has often been of service when a diamond has not been at hand, for cutting ovals and segments, and though the edges are not so smooth as might be desired for some purposes, yet it will answer in many cases. The two hints given above, if strictly followed, will always insure success.